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Gilbert Parker

THE WORLD IN THE CRUCIBLE

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGINS & CONDUCT OF THE GREAT WAR

By GILBERT PARKER

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WHOSE

"FRANCE"

HAS SO POWERFULLY SHOWN US WHAT GERMANY
WOULD MUTILATE OR DESTROY

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NOTE

In the analysis of the negotiations preceding the war, and in the various researches necessary to the presentation of historical and current facts, I have been very greatly indebted to Mr. Richard Dawson, whose devotion and faithful care have made my task, with its many attendant difficulties, easier.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

THE GERMAN EMPIRE FROM WITHIN 1

CHAPTER II

THE KAISER AND HIS POLICY 33

CHAPTER III

MIGHT IS RIGHT AND WAR IS THE GERMAN GOOD 56

CHAPTER IV

THE PLACE IN THE SUN 87

CHAPTER V

GERMAN COLONIAL POLICY, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE 105

CHAPTER VI

THE OPPORTUNITY 126

CHAPTER VII

THE CLOUD IN THE EAST 142

CHAPTER VIII

BRITISH POLICY, EUROPEAN AND COLONIAL 159

CHAPTER IX

WHAT DID ENGLAND DO FOR PEACE? 174

CHAPTER X

"CASUS BELLI" 189

CHAPTER XI

WAR 207

CHAPTER XII

ENGLAND MOVES 229

CHAPTER XIII

"BRAVE BELGIUM" 244

CHAPTER XIV

THE SEDUCTION OF TURKEY 278

CHAPTER XV

SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE AND THE BALKAN QUESTION 291

CHAPTER XVI

CIVILIZATION AND THIS WAR 314

CHAPTER XVII

"FRIGHTFULNESS" 342

CHAPTER XVIII

LIGHTS AND LESSONS OF THE WAR 380

APPENDICES 409

INDEX 415

THE WORLD IN THE CRUCIBLE

ENGLAND

"I see her not dispirited, not weak, but well remembering that she has seen dark days before; indeed, with a kind of instinct that she sees a little better in a cloudy day, and that in storm of battle and calamity she has a secret vigour and a pulse like cannon. I see her in her old age, not decrepit, but young, and still daring to believe in her power of endurance and expansion. Seeing this, I say, All hail! Mother of nations, Mother of heroes, with strength still equal to the time; still wise to entertain and swift to execute the policy which the mind and heart of mankind require at the present hour, and thus only hospitable to the foreigner, and truly a home to the thoughtful and generous, who are born in the soil. So be it! So let it be!"

RALPH WALDO EMERSON, 1856.

CHAPTER I

THE GERMAN EMPIRE FROM WITHIN

THE crime of Serajevo was in no real sense the cause of the great war now devastating Europe. It fired a mine, however, which was charged with the material of generations and had had the very anxious attention of two decades of diplomacy. To discover the origins of this tragic conflict we must travel far behind the events of June and the diplomatic correspondence of July of 1914; and that correspondence cannot be understood unless read in the light of German "World Politics," or *Weltpolitik*.

That Germany has cherished designs of aggression is admitted by her own writers, and by no one more emphatically than by the notorious General von Bernhardi, who has been the busy missioner of Pan-Germanism and Prussian militarism. In his book, *Germany and the Next War,* this candid champion declares that the German people were condemned to political paralysis at the time when the great European States built themselves up and expanded into World Powers; but that they did not enter the circle of the Powers, whose decision carried weight in politics, until late, when the partition of the globe was long concluded; when after centuries of natural development other nations had attained political union, colonial possessions, naval power, and international trade. Having thus stated the actual and numbing fact, he stoutly says:

"What we now wish to attain must be *fought for,* and won, against a superior force of hostile interests and Powers."

The attenuated version of the doctrine so boldly enunciated by this enterprising militarist and his class — that Germany must go to war because she must expand and cannot, because she is being choked; because she needs Colonies to receive the overflow of her population; because Great Britain, the robber-nation, obstructs her expansion, may for the moment be dismissed. A nation like Germany, which has given several millions of its people to the United States alone, cannot complain of having no oversea refuge for her people, especially when German Americans are expected to remain German in all essentials, and to be organized to support German Imperial interests. Of course no nation — least of all one great, proud and powerful — can view unmoved the migration of its most virile and enterprising sons to foreign lands, to become the wealth-producers of rival countries; but of late years German emigration has been almost negligible. Growing industrial prosperity and an admirable agrarian system, supported by an equally admirable system of co-operation, enabled Prince Bülow in a recent year to record with complacency that the average emigration from Germany has shrunk to no more than 22,500 persons every year. Contrasted with the figures of British emigration these numbers are infinitesimal. Certainly they are insufficient to be an important factor in precipitating a world-wide war, even if war on such a basis were otherwise than criminal and barbaric. To make war simply to acquire territory has every precedent in Prussian history — no student can forget Schleswig-Holstein, Alsace-Lorraine, Poland and Silesia — but it is regarded with disapproval by all other civilized nations.

Though it is impossible to account for the present

aggression of Germany on the ground of commercial and economic necessity; on the plea that there was no room to breathe behind the Rhine and the Baltic; that new dominions oversea were indispensable to her; it is possible to find one of the true causes in far-reaching political necessity and purpose which could not rely on natural and peaceful development, accompanied by increased constitutional freedom, responsibility, and opportunity for the masses. Boundless as may have been the ambitions of the now chastened Kaiser, to charge him with a merely aimless lust for World-Empire and the purely adventurous spirit of a chevalier-at-arms would be foolish. He cannot be credited with the higher qualities of Alexander or of Napoleon, whose vision had genius behind it in the days when the spirit of conquest for conquest's sake was still alive in a partly-civilized world. It is only possible to acquit him partially of their unwholesome attributes after studying the conditions of Germany as revealed in her contemporary history.

There is perhaps nothing in all the archives of time more surprising than the failure of Germany to succeed as an Imperial Power. More than once she had Empire — great unorganized Empire — within her grasp, and each time she let it go. She shattered the Western Empire of Rome, but she failed to establish herself on the ruins. She could seize, but she could not hold; the German people have never had the genius either for colonization or for Imperial policy.

Charlemagne's Empire covered the whole of central Europe.[1] The Elbe, the Garonne, and Venice

[1] By this it is not meant that Charlemagne was a German. The Frankish Empire, however, included Germany. The Ottonid sovereigns, beginning with Otto the Great, asserted their claim to the

were harbours for his ships; his banner flew at Ushant and Semlin; he was crowned at Aix and in St. Peter's Church at Rome. Even after his death, the German Empire was a splendid fabric. France, indeed, was lost; but to balance that the Ottonides and Hohenstaufen extended their territories to the East, beyond Bohemia and Moravia, even across the Oder and across Pomerania towards Prussia — Borussia as it was then named. The Hohenstaufen ruled from the Rhone, the Meuse and the Scheldt to the Slavonic regions on the east, from the North Sea and the Baltic as far as Naples; Denmark, Bohemia, and Poland were their tributaries. When Frederick, the last of that great House, was excommunicated and deposed by Innocent IX, with derisive retort he could crown himself with seven crowns — the royal crown of Germany, the Imperial diadem of Rome, the iron circlet of Lombardy, the crowns of Sicily, Burgundy, Sardinia, and Jerusalem.

So in the space of a few centuries the great Empires of Charlemagne, of Otho, and of Barbarossa, rose and fell, springing up under the genius of some illustrious man, and then flickering out like those stars which, brightening for a moment into splendour, die down again to the lowest magnitude, consumed by their own internal fires. In the story of the rise and fall of these dynasties there is a singular monotony. Their very military achievements, brilliant as they were and brimming with the romance of adventure, become wearisome through repetition. Always there are the expeditions to the south, with the

Western Roman Empire as deriving from Charles the Great. Although, therefore, the Empire of Charles was not German, it was the progenitor of the later German Empire. It may be noted, too, that Charlemagne's capital was on the east of the Rhine and that his crown was preserved in Vienna.

reconquest of Italy as the first step in the career of every Emperor; always the story of the conqueror recalled from the shores of the Mediterranean to deal with some truculent vassal at home. Warlike enterprises under the standard of the Cross, profitless conquests on the Po and Adige, valiant deeds, endless slaughter, and nothing to show for it all in the end. If the defeat of the forces of Genghis Khan and the stemming of the tide of Mongol invasion are expected, it is hard to point to a single victory gained by the German States which had any permanent influence on their history. But we search in vain amid all this warlike glory of the far past for any signs of a national awakening, such as may be found in England under the early Plantagenets, the contemporaries of the Hohenstaufen. We may find in Richard I a replica of the policy of the Hohenstaufen princes; but under none of them can be discerned such movements as distinguished the reigns of Henry II, John, Henry III, and Henry V of England.

Yet there never was a people to all outward seeming more destined and fitted for Empire than the Germans. They were homogeneous in blood, prolific, virile, gifted with bodily and mental powers above the ordinary, industrious, thrifty, thorough and patriotic. Their geographical position gave them outlets to every sea, while great rivers gave the people of the interior easy access to the ocean. Their lands were well adapted for defence, while their central position afforded them easy means of attack. In spite of all that they failed. Their record is one of complete failure imperially, but of amazing power to establish themselves domestically, to transcend the most discouraging and trying conditions in the single state. The proved inheritor of

these attributes and capacities is Prussia, the bravest, strongest, most merciless and most uncivilized State of the German Empire and of Europe in all that is truly essential to civilization. Bounded on every hand by conflicting powers, the German countries endured and prevailed as separate States always. There were thirty-eight of them in 1815, with Prussia, the slowly emerging rival of Austria, at the head. Other nations have been beaten down and blotted out, but not Germany. Her indomitable spirit has always risen superior to defeat, however ruinous. Germans have held the German lands through the centuries, and again and again have spread their rule through almost every corner of Europe. They rose to the opportunity for acquiring and developing Empire when the fall of Rome cleared the way; but they squandered their opportunities, and proved themselves unequal to the task. Their epitaph is that of Galba: *Capax imperii nisi imperasset.* They could conquer, but they could not govern. They could maintain their freedom, but they could not create an empire, though they had rare virtues of nationality, of a "particularism" never more strikingly shown than to-day. Their present organization is the triumph of a policy of forty years, wherein the separate States of the Germany of 1871 have been steadily educated in the cult of war by the Prussian military element; by universities which do the bidding of the Government; by a Press which is a State Press; by politicians and statesmen who have persistently and systematically told the German people that to them belong the governance of the world, and that by their sword shall the world be redeemed from the other arrogant Powers, such as England, that now control it.

At first thought it is perhaps not surprising that, in the past, the German people failed to bring permanently into their Empire races so divergent as those of Italy, Bohemia, and Burgundy, though Great Britain succeeded, and Rome, Persia, and France had succeeded before her. Out of the Heptarchy grew England, an agglomeration of half a dozen races. Great Britain sprang from union with the Gaelic people of the North and the Celtic people of the West. France built up a solid State out of Provinces widely differing in blood, in language, and in ideals: from Normans and Bretons, from Gascons and Burgundians and Provencals, even from Germans of Elsass and Lotharingen; Italy evolved union from a dozen States which through centuries had been mortal foes. Germany alone remains to-day a congeries of States, which, with all allowance for modern development, in essentials is scarcely removed from the tribal condition of fifteen hundred years ago, in spite of the loud celebration of German unity which has assailed the ears of the world for the last generation.

Prince Bülow, in his book *Imperial Germany,* admits this with admirable candour. These are words of moment:

"No nation has found it so difficult as the German to attain solid and permanent political institutions, although it was the first, after the break-up of the antique world and the troublous times of the migration of nations, to acquire that peace in national existence founded on might which is the preliminary condition for the growth of real political life. Though, thanks to Germany's military prowess, she found it easy enough to overcome foreign obstruction and interference in her national life, at all times the German people found it very hard to overcome even small obstacles in their own political development."

Indeed, as Prince Bülow further says, the story of Imperial Germany is one in which national unity has been the exception, and Separatism in various forms, adapted to the circumstances of the times, the rule, while what is true of the past is also true of the present. No nation has a history fuller of great achievements in most spheres of man's activity; certainly none will deny that German military and intellectual exploits are remarkable; but the history of no other nation tells of such utter disproportion between political progress on the one hand and military success on the other. During long epochs of political impotence, owing to which Germany was crowded out of the ranks of the Great Powers, there are few defeats of German arms by foreign forces to record, if the time of Napoleon I be excepted. Her prolonged national misfortunes and failures to seize opportunities of colonial development were not due to foreigners, or foreign aggression or oppression, but to her own fault.[2]

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this judgment of his countrymen, delivered by the most notable of German statesmen since Bismarck. Nor is it an isolated opinion. It was not quite original of Prince Bülow to inform us that political talent has been denied to the German nation, and that the Germans lack that political sense which connotes a sense of the general good, for Goethe, a hundred years before, found "The Germans very capable individually, and wretchedly inefficient in the bulk"; while General von Bernhardi, the ever candid, superficial, and effusive, insists that there is no people so little qualified as the German to direct his own destiny in the field of diplomacy and politics, internal

[2] Von Bülow's *Imperial Germany*, pp. 127–136.

and external. This political incapacity of thinking for the common good; of acting through constitutional forms and legislation devised and projected under constitutional forms, for many units in one whole, which has been the persistent attribute of the German race through the centuries, has taken the form of what is variously called by their own spokesmen Separatism, or "the centrifugal forces of the German nation."

In every department of influence and activity, wherein political judgment is necessary to accommodate varying factors in the national organism, the German people are unfortunate in their acts and lacking in vision and understanding. With a somewhat fatal gift of logic and speculative thought, and a rare faculty for methodical research, they have little instinct for discovery and small initiative. Lacking in true discernment, their values are distorted by an egotism which leads them to believe that motives cannot be seen; that the most elementary perception is denied those whom they oppose, or whom they would control, influence, use, or govern. Political capacity is a combination of many attributes, and tact, in the real and deeper sense, is as much an integral part of statesmanship as capacity. In the politics of a nation it is not enough to accept a principle, or find an object in itself desirable; the application of the principle must depend upon and be harmonious with racial character and genius, and be adjusted to particular national circumstances. The desirable end can only be reached by finding those methods and that logic which coincide with the temper and character of the people. In a country where the peremptory attitude of mind is characteristic of the governed and the governing, and where autocracy gives the governing class the initiative,

political development must meet with many checks both in internal and external policy. Obedience to the dictates of the ruling class may secure acceptance of policy; but voluntary will and mental assent and reciprocity are necessary to secure the effective working of any constitution and any law, in a community of free men; especially in a community affected by contiguous democratic examples and influence.

Even with the astute Bismarck at the helm, the Junker's incapacity to be politically wise, to carry out policy along the lines of negotiable resistance, had occasional demonstration, in one case imperilling the Confederation of 1871 at its very start. Aiming at the subjection and elimination, as a political factor, of the Roman Catholic establishment in Germany, the Iron Chancellor passed laws designed to undermine Catholicism as a practical force in the affairs of government. But when the Kulturkampf and the Falk Laws raised a storm, and were met by a powerful and hostile demonstration, Bismarck beat a retreat, undignified and precipitate, leaving him to the end of his career *vis-à-vis* of a clericalism in the State which daunted even his bold spirit.

If tactfulness may be applied to the business of war, the German nation has shown especial inaptitude for it in the present conflict. Its Press Campaign in the United States has been marked by amazing gaucherie and childishness; its Ambassador has been as awkward in pursuing his purpose as his enemies could well wish. Whenever by accident or through circumstances some moment's advantage has been gained, as in the case of the difficulty between England and the United States over contraband, the purchase of ships by the American Government, or the sailings of the *Dacia,* the German Government has immediately neutralized it by acts against inter-

national law, ferocious in their nature and futile in effect; such as the bombardment of the unfortified English coast towns by warships, and of hamlets and villages by airships. The acts in themselves produce nothing save an incomprehensible joy on the part of the German Press and denunciation from the Press and people of all neutral countries; while naval and military experts have been unable to see the material advantage to Germany of these demonstrations of savage force against non-combatants and unfortified places. The nation they are meant to cow or anger has only deepened its conviction that it is fighting an unsportsmanlike country, which breaks all rules, even those to which it has given its hand and seal; defies all principles, even those which are inherent in that culture to which it ostentatiously professes devotion; and repudiates the morals of that civilization which it aspires to control.

In other words, Germany's political acumen, its power to adjust theories to nation-life and world-life are antipodean to its military capacity and power, as it has always been. The leading evening paper of New York, repeating an almost universal editorial sentiment, said of the airship raid of the English coast:

"It cannot be justified, it has no warrant in international law, and is against both the spirit and the letter of the Hague Convention. No military necessity can be pleaded. It is a bit of pure savagery, a mere exhibition of ferocity, wholly futile."

More characteristic still of the blind insistence with which Germany flings all prudence, wisdom and reason to the winds when she wills things to be and her will is crossed by her foes, was her declaration made to the world that she would meet the legitimate

acts of war of Great Britain in preventing food reaching German ports by torpedoing all merchantmen, belligerent or neutral, with cargoes and passengers in a declared war-zone, which embraced the British Isles. No neutral flag would save such merchantmen, and lives and ships would be destroyed if they ventured within this prohibited sphere. That did not matter to the government concerning whose acts a great New York paper asks, "Do nations go crazy?" and adds, that Germany could not make this so-called blockade effective, and that if she could not do so it was piracy and nothing else. She would run amok out of rage and resentment at being checked on her conquering course.

Ever since the war began Germany has spent hundreds of thousands of pounds trying to influence American opinion in her favour and against the Allies. With the question of the *Dacia* and the transfer of ships; of the *Wilhelmina* and conditional contraband, troubling and even inflaming the American spirit; with every reason for silence, yet she threw away all her advantage in rage at the idea of a British liner flying the American flag, challenged civilization, and defied American opinion; with what results the world knows. It is the madness of the bull in the ring goaded by the bandilleros, and charging the bandilleros while the matador, who is the real enemy, waits till madness and wounds have made all ready for the end. Germany, instead of keeping her eye steadily on the matador, has gone plunging down the arena, forgetting or repudiating the fact that there is a political side to war, and that the rules of the game must be observed, even from the lowest standpoint of material advantage. In the end the penalty for the broken rule is exacted one way or another. Tilly and his Bavarians paid for the sack of Magdeburg.

Yet " back to Tilly " has been the cry of the modern German militarist; hence the policy of " frightfulness " and " hacking the way through."

Thus always the slave of its theory, military, political or national, the helpless, because voluntary, victim of merciless logic, Germany deliberately invites the scorn and anger of the world because the act which produces the scorn and anger fits in with " the scheme." The greater end is forgotten in the immediate and fanatically logical purpose. Once the logic is accepted and declared, the end is forced without assuagement or modification.

This is all in odious harmony with the affront offered to a civilized nation, in the proposal made by Germany in the pre-war negotiations that England should repudiate her Ally, France, and hold her back if necessary by force, while Russia was being defeated. All Germany wanted, if she fought France, was to strip that country of its colonies and oversea dominions, so reducing her to the position of a second-rate Power — that was all! No nation with perception and perspicacity could have made such proposals, whatever the evil in its heart. She would have foreseen the rejection of them by any honourable country. Unless she was sure of the dishonourable character of the nation she was trying to seduce she would not attempt so dangerous a task. There are some things which even a peace-loving nation like Great Britain could not endure; but German policy could not, or would not, see that. The Kruger telegram in 1896 was a political blunder of similar nature, for unless the Kaiser was prepared for war humiliation could only be the result of that challenge. Political incapacity denied him the necessary insight to prevent that adventure into other people's business. Then, however, was laid the plot to make

South Africa German; then began the conspiracy and the dirty intrigues, the spying and the preparations of which General Botha has spoken since this war began; and the details of which will be given to the world in due course.

Almost as egregious was the Kaiser's blunder from the standpoint of public opinion in his own country and in Great Britain by writing the Tweedmouth letter, in which he attempted to modify the naval policy of this country privately through the First Lord of the Admiralty. It had a fitting pendant in the *Daily Telegraph* interview in which he acknowledged that the prevailing sentiment of his country was not friendly to England; and in which he declared that he had worked out a plan of campaign with his General Staff for the conduct of the South African war and made a gift of it to this country. The storm the Kaiser raised in Germany, the suspicion his overzealous sympathy aroused in England, were the natural fruits of a perverse political sense which to achieve its end took no account of probabilities, possibilities, or human nature. It is to be noted that in many of the Kaiser's indiscretions he has offended his own people even more than foreigners, and in each case has given fresh evidence of that political incapacity characteristic of his House and his people. By the Swinemunde Despatch of 1903 to the Prince Regent of Bavaria, in which he rebuked the Bavarian Diet by offering to pay their rejected annual grant of five thousand pounds for art purposes, he roused the sharp resentment of Bavarians. The telegram to Count Goluchowski, the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, approving him as a "brilliant second" in the "tourney" at Algeciras, was wilfully provocative to Russia as it was humiliating to the historic Empire of Austria to which Prussia, before

1866, had played a "wily and unreliable second." The Kaiser's tactlessness in 1908 in expressing his wish that the President of the United States would send Mr. Griscom as Ambassador to Berlin after Dr. David Jayne Hill had been already appointed, was as awkward for the Chancelleries of Berlin and Washington as it was bad-mannered and intrusive. The incident, not portentous in itself, was but another proof of the sightless political intelligence of the German over-lord, who has again and again rebuffed, rebuked and offended his own Parliament, which he and his House have ever considered a hindrance rather than a help to good government.

Travel back through the pages of German history as far as you will, and the same spirit of political tactlessness is to be found and the same practice at work; in less degree, however, within the Bismarckian epoch — that is, from 1858 until the great Chancellor made way for the neutral-spirited Caprivi. Bismarck's vast ambition made his policy corrupt and ruthless; but consummate adroitness and knowledge of human nature made his diplomacy possible and successful. He was sage enough, in the demon-sense, to secure Austria's assistance in the taking of Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark and then to rob her of Holstein; unscrupulous and astute enough, by the battle of Sadowa, to eject Austria, which had been for so long the leader and master of the Germanic States, out of the orbit of Germanic power for ever. Realizing that Austria, after 1866, would try for her revenge in as near a day as possible, he decided to check the hope completely and for all time. The time was now ripe to carry out the big policy of German national unity — the combination of a series of German States — which could only be accomplished by an external war. The unpreparedness, dis-

organization and corruption of France offered him his opportunity. By the Siege of Paris and the Treaty of Frankfurt Germanic federation was secured, and Austria's revenge was indefinitely postponed. In 1848, Frederick William IV had rejected the offer of the Imperial Crown to Prussia, since Prussia was not then strong enough to be master of her sister States, but only a partner with them; but 1870 saw Prussia a leader strong enough to dominate the projected union. That was a brilliant period in German history, and, so far as war-policy is concerned, it was supreme. It had all the unscrupulous vigour and duplicity of Frederick the Great, the atheist, who became the champion of the Protestant nations, the deserter from the Pragmatic Sanction who robbed Maria Theresa of Silesia. It was the clearly stated policy embodied in Bismarck's phrase, "Not by speeches, nor by the decision of a majority, but by blood and iron." Not by the decision of a majority! Here spoke the true Prussian in the spirit of the Middle Ages in a country where then and now and always man has been the child of the State, where representative government has been a name, not a reality.

The Emperor William I, whom the Kaiser is forever celebrating in his speeches, early in his career as King of Prussia wished to abdicate rather than be governed by a Parliamentary majority. Bismarck, however, met the difficulty by governing for some years without a budget and freed from the control of Parliament. In 1867, in the Prussian Chamber, Bismarck bluntly said:

"Since the last speaker has expressed a certain degree of surprise that I should have spent perhaps the best years of my public life in combating the Parliamentary right of dis-

cussing the Budget, I will just remind him that it may not be quite certain that the army which gained last year's battles would have possessed the organization by which it gained them if, in the autumn of the year 1862, no one had been found ready to undertake the conduct of affairs according to His Majesty's orders and putting aside the resolution passed by the Chamber of Deputies on the 23rd of September of that year."

For five years Bismarck defied the Chamber's resolutions, and after William II came to the throne, when "His Majesty's orders" were rejected by the Chamber in 1893, the Reichstag refusing to agree to increased expenditure for defence, and again during the Morocco difficulty, and on the same basis, the Chamber was promptly dissolved. Then the cry of nationalism and expansion was raised, and the military element once again triumphed in a country which finds in war its inspiration and its means to material advancement.

Of Bismarck's policy thus much has remained, the Blood and Iron, hardened into a ghastly creed of conquest: not European conquest alone, but conquest beyond the seas — a policy to which Bismarck was always opposed, declaring that the Germans had no gift for colonization and that long years should be spent in consolidating European possessions. One of those political mistakes which have always prevented Germany from retaining empire is to be found in the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, to which it is well understood Bismarck was opposed, only giving assent to it under pressure from Von Moltke. It was a piece of political ineptitude and incapacity which time has made more naked.

There are historians who declare that the seeds of representative government in the world were first

sown in ancient Germany.[3] However that may be, Prussia, whose King is now the German Emperor, has never yet given democratic government to her people. Democratic government does not exist in the States of Germany (there is more semblance of it in Bavaria than elsewhere); though there has been extraordinary social legislation which might well be the product of a socialistic State, its object being to reconcile the masses — and it has been done effectively so far as this war is concerned — to a more rigid autocracy than exists in Russia or in any other

[3] In an interesting article published in the *Outlook* of New York, in November, 1914, Professor Robert McElray, of Princeton University, advances the theory and supports it by references of much point: "The idea of representative government," he says, "so far as its history can be traced, first appeared in the forests of Germany, and has long been known among political theorists as the Teutonic Idea. Wherever we find Teutons in the earliest days of European history, we find not only the primary assembly which had been familiar to the people of ancient Greece and Rome, but also rough attempts at representative assemblies." He explains how gradually the Teutonic Idea was defeated on the continent of Europe, how the gospel of force overcame the gospel of representative government, how Germany ceased to be a nation, and the countries which imbibed her idea presently lost it under the harsh spirit which outspread over Europe from Cæsar's rule. But he declares that in the British Isles the Teutonic Idea took root and lived, becoming a nation's Charter at Runnymede, being somewhat battered in the period which begot the American Revolution, and springing to life again in the Reform Bill of 1832. After sketching the development of the Teutonic Idea in England, he uses these striking phrases: "There are no Runnymede barons, no Simon de Montforts, no Oliver Cromwells, no Abraham Lincolns, in the history of Prussia. Slowly, but with a grim and terrible certainty, the iron hand of the Prussian War Lord has brought the German nation to exactly the position to which King George III attempted to bring England and the American colonies. In Germany the Teutonic Idea is dead. A mixed race, more Slavonic than Teutonic, the Prussian, has deprived the German people of their birthright. There, as Professor Cramb strikingly phrases it, 'Corsica . . . has conquered Galilee.' The ideals of Prussia remain to-day just what they were in the days of the Great Elector — ideals of absolute monarchy — and the German Empire has accepted them."

State in the world to-day. Grudgingly and churlishly Frederick William IV promised a constitution to Prussia in 1847, together with the pledge that the so-called Parliament should have some control over expenditure; but when it came to the pinch he withheld the pledged powers and said:

"I will never let a sheet of written paper come between our Lord God in Heaven and our country, to rule us by its paragraphs and to put them in the place of ancient loyalty."

Under pressure he gave the Constitution after the Revolution, but he left a letter enjoining his successors to abolish it, lest it should in the end impair the power of the Crown. It is stated, whether or not with truth, that Kaiser William II destroyed that letter; in any case he has faithfully interpreted the spirit of it.

The Revolution of 1848, followed by a period of grave internal disorder, in which the army was the only thing remaining powerfully effective in the State — the one great implement of Prussian power and advancement, had as its sequel the massive and eloquent period of William I and Bismarck. Under them the ground was recaptured which was lost between that period from the death of Frederick the Great until the death of the insane Frederick William IV in 1861. Unwittingly, Napoleon did one great service to Prussia when he arranged the confederation of the Rhine States, thereby laying the lines of, and pointing the way to, future German confederation. Unintentionally also another service was rendered Prussia by Napoleon, when her eastern Polish possessions were taken from her, and her possessions were limited to Brandenburg, Silesia, and the two Provinces, with a total population of 5,000,000. For the time this indeed lessened Prus-

sia's problems and difficulties, and forced her to look westward for the increase of empire; not in vain. The Congress of Vienna, in place of the old Polish provinces which Saxony had secured in 1807, endowed her with the Rhine provinces, Posen and Pomerania, together with parts of Saxony and central Germany; and thereafter followed, under the incapable leadership of Austria, a loose Federation without a real constitution, closely allied to the old Confederation of the Rhine.

There is nothing denunciatory said to-day by the critics of Germany which equals the strictures on her character as a State, not as a people, by Count d'Angeberg, who, with bitterness, in his publication, *Le Congrès de Vienne et les Traités de* 1815, says:

"For the Prussian Monarchy any pretext is good. It is altogether devoid of scruples. Mere convenience is its conception of right. . . . The terrible discomfiture that has befallen its ambition has taught it nothing. Even at this moment its agents and partisans are agitating Germany, depicting France as being again ready to invade it, pretending that Prussia alone is capable of defending it, and asking it to hand itself over to her for its very preservation. She would have liked to have Belgium. She wants everything between the present frontiers of France, the Meuse and the Rhine. She wants Luxemburg. All is up if Mayence is not given her. Security is impossible for her if she does not possess Saxony. . . . It is necessary, therefore, to set a limit to her ambition, first, by restraining, as far as possible, her expansion in Germany; secondly, by restraining her influence by means of a federal constitution. Her expansion will be restrained by preservation of all the small States, and by the aggrandizement of those that are her nearer rivals."

Prussia had in turn deserted Napoleon for the Allies and the Allies for Napoleon, always for a price; the great European prostitute whose virtue

was for sale. Jena was the consequence. Nothing has changed in Prussia or in Germany since d'Angeberg's day, so far as character is concerned. Official Germany which, under Frederick the Great, made wars ruthlessly without warning and with only one purpose, the declared purpose of conquest, makes war ruthlessly and for conquest still, with none of the warrant for aggression of that less developed period in which Frederick lived; and in an age when the world desires peace and not war, approves of colonization but not of territorial robbery.

To enlarge her Empire in her ancient way, and to resist the growing seeds of internal disruption, Germany set forth upon a ghastly foray for gain and territory in the year 1914, entrenched behind the plans of forty years. Fortunately for the world, a handful of people in Belgium and a handful of soldiers on the Marne stopped her before France was once again crushed by the heel of the Uhlan conqueror; before she and her accomplice Austria beat back the Russians; before the Balkans were overborne and their fate sealed to Austria in part and to Germany in part, while for Germany her highway to empire in Asia Minor and Persia was made open and secure.

In one of his great sane moments, having accomplished what he wished by dubious methods, Bismarck said:

"Even victorious wars can only be justified when they are forced upon a nation, for we cannot foresee the cards held by Providence so nearly as to anticipate the historical development by personal calculation."

Like Napoleon, Bismarck always knew well what he ought to do and what nations ought to do, and he was careful enough to break his own rules only

when he was certain of the result. His policy was marked by stern caution. Knowing the internal weakness of the German character and the natural incapacity of his fellow-countrymen for political development, he realized that only by emphasizing the spirit of nationality, while providing the fruits of a spurious liberalism to keep the masses quiet, would Prussian policy preserve the German states and kingdoms united in an organized Imperial system. Such facts as these must be remembered when trying to understand why a nation like Germany should be so inflamed into war-policy and war-passion.

Through lack of political ability, through want of creative faculty, the German imperial organization constantly tends towards disintegration. The one cure for this " internal disorder " which the German people have ever yet been able to discover is external adventure. " War," says Treitschke, " is the only remedy for ailing nations." They have, however, never been able to find any counterbalance to their diplomatic incapacity, so lamentably shown during the present war, their only definite triumph having been the seduction of Turkey, with its obvious perils to the seducer.

Bernhardi hints at this truth when he points out that Germany has no half-way house between progress and retrogression. Her first need is ever to strengthen and consolidate the institutions best calculated to counteract and concentrate the centrifugal forces working in the body politic. This, of course, is the first duty of every statesman; but the German soldier-philosopher does not attempt to achieve it, as others have done, on lines of internal development and reform and social evolution. It has to be accomplished by merging all party feeling, all distracting and conflicting elements, in a common system of

defence by land and sea; and by creating a strong Empire controlled by powerful national feeling and policy. But even this is not enough. The spirit of German Separatism is too strong to be neutralized by purely defensive measures. The German people have always been incapable of great acts for the common interest except under the irresistible pressure of external conditions, as in 1813; or under the leadership of powerful personalities, who can inflame the national spirit, arouse the enthusiasm of the masses, and vitalize nationality. In other words, it is admitted by the most prominent of German statesmen and teachers that German unity is a feeble plant which has to be forced in the hotbed of war.

To find the doctrine of foreign aggression as the antidote to political incapacity set forth with fullest vigour and decision we must search the writings of Prince Bülow. It may seem paradoxical that the carefully-trained and subtle statesman, rather than the rough soldier, should be the more outspoken; yet it is really not so strange as it seems. Bernhardi is the soldier, loving war for its own sake and in its most ruthless form, and endeavouring to ennoble it by ethical and philosophic sanctions. Prince Bülow is the statesman, not enamoured of war in itself, but convinced of its inevitable necessity if Germany is to survive as a single nation. Accordingly, in his work, *Imperial Germany*, when dealing with the political regeneration of his people, he frankly abandons all pretence that it has come from within. He does not claim to be the discoverer of the path to the reconciliation of the hopes of the German people and the interests of the German governments. That high distinction he concedes to Prince Bismarck.

'It was Bismarck's good fortune to have at hand a strategist like Von Moltke and an organizer like Von

Roon. But it was his own intuitive genius which made him see in these men the instruments of federal union. In the Sixties, Bismarck realized that the will-power of the German nation would not be strengthened, or its natural passion roused, by friction between the government and the people, but by the clash of German pride and German honour against the position and power of foreign nations. So long as the unification so desired was a question of home politics it was powerless to give birth to a compelling national movement which would sweep States and princes and their people along the tide of a conquering enthusiasm. By making it clear, however, that the issue was essentially one of European politics, Bismarck gave the princes the opportunity of heading the national movement, when the time for developing the policy was ripe.

Prince Bismarck saw that the unification of Germany would not be attained without opposition in Europe. Other nations might watch the movement without apprehension, so long as it was merely an aspiration; they could not view it unmoved when it entered on the stage of realization; but in that very opposition and the struggle with it he saw the certainty of success. In the words of Prince Bülow:

"The opposition in Germany itself could hardly be overcome except by such a struggle . . . with incomparable audacity and constructive statesmanship in consummating the work of uniting Germany, he left out of play the political capabilities of the Germans, in which they have never excelled, while he called into action their fighting powers, which have always been their strongest point."

Illuminated by this exposition of the exigencies of the German situation, the Bismarckian policy of the Sixties shines out with remarkable clearness — the

ruthless attack on Denmark by Austria and Prussia; the quarrel of the bandit States over the division of the plunder; the manipulation of the Ems despatch, in which Bismarck altered the words to make it appear that the Emperor William refused to receive the French Ambassador. Truth is, the natural political impotence of the German race was galvanized into a semblance of real and immense capacity and life by the batteries of Sadowa and Sedan.

Thus was Germany given a third lease of Empire; of which not half a century has yet run. For a third of that period it looked as though the task so often undertaken and as often abandoned had been consummated at last. Exalted by the "enthusiasm," which, as Prince Bülow tells us, was Bismarck's greatest creation, the nation set itself to vast schemes of social and economic reform. In the glamour of commercial and industrial triumphs, as wonderful as any the world has seen, national unity seemed solidly achieved; yet already there were forces at work to impel the rulers of Germany towards a departure from Bismarck's policy. Enthusiasm is an ephemeral stimulant, and it has proved powerless against the ineradicable Separatism of German national life. Even though it did not show itself in any overt discontent in the Germanic States, it made itself felt in the blind bitterness of political parties, and notably in the growth of Social Democracy. The Ottonid and Hohenstaufen Empires had fallen, not as the result of conquest, but by the intrigues of aggrieved foreign States and by German Separatism. By the seizure of Alsace and Lorraine the Hohenzollern dynasty sowed the seeds of similar influences, not direct, as in the Middle Ages, but still as injurious to German consolidation. The Statue of Strassburg in Paris was draped in mourning, never to be removed

until the *revanche* had been achieved. The existence of enemies connoted a necessity for armaments; the demand for armaments aroused bitter debates; the German Government had to play party against party; all of which rekindled the Separatist parochialism which Prince Bülow deplores with the eloquence of bitter experience.

It is impossible to read the ex-Chancellor's account of the growth and significance of the Social Democratic movement in Germany without the conviction that German unity was still based on insecure foundations; and that the foundations could not be made safe without a further advance towards the constitutional absorption by Prussia of the subordinate States of South Germany. The position which the German Government faced during the last twenty years was one of astonishing complexity. The attitude of Southern Germany towards Social Democracy has differed largely from that of Prussia. The peculiar character of Prussia, less free constitutionally than any other German state, yet the backbone of German political life, has made the solution of the Social Democratic problem particularly difficult for Germany. The practical *modus vivendi* with the Social Democrats, attempted here and there in Southern Germany, does not seem possible in Prussia.

This is Prince Bülow's view and his exposition of the thesis demands the most careful attention. He finds German Social Democracy to be antinational, and incomparably more hostile to the State than the Socialism of France and Italy, which has sprung from great patriotic movements, such as the Revolution and the Risorgimento, both inspired by an intensely national spirit. In his view Social Democracy is the antithesis of the Prussian State:

"The Social Democrats hate the Kingdom of the Eagle . . . as being a State of orderly organization, the heart and core of the German Empire . . . whose kings united Germany, with which the future of the Empire stands or falls."

Prussia is still, in greater degree than the other members of the Empire, a State of soldiers and officials, and by her strong control has always evoked a particularly vigorous counter-movement. As a result, whenever the control of the State has been relaxed in Prussia, the breakdown of her State machinery has been more complete and hopeless than in any other country. If, therefore, the Prussian Government had wished to come to terms with Social Democracy, as other German States have done in greater or less degree, its officials and even the Army itself would have regarded it as "a shameful surrender to the enemy, the result would be more fatal in Prussia than the weakness towards the March revolution was"; and it is very questionable whether another Bismarck could be found to restore the authority of the Crown. To have yielded to the Social Democrats would have shattered that confidence of Prussian officials and soldiers in the Crown which is essential to devoted loyalty, and the only result would have been an enormous increase in the strength of Social Democracy. These are Prince Bülow's arguments.

So far as Prussia is concerned, then, the policy is simple. It is that of rigid suppression. But here arises a complication, which must be described in Prince Bülow's own words:

"The peculiarities of Prussian conditions must, of course, react upon the Empire. . . . The Social Democrats will hardly be willing to come to an arrangement in the Empire so long as they are opposed in Prussia. On the other hand

an attempt on the part of the Imperial Government to make an agreement would have the same confusing and disintegrating effect on Prussia as a similar attempt in that State itself. If the Empire is governed without reference to Prussia, ill-will towards the Empire will grow in that country. If Prussia is governed without reference to the Empire, then there is the danger that distrust and dislike of the leading State will gain ground in non-Prussian Germany." [4]

Here we have a plain confession of forces making for disintegration as formidable as any that threatened and wrecked the old German Empires; influences as disquieting as those which produced the Revolution of 1848. If the political demands of Social Democracy were refused, German Separatism would remain active; if they were conceded, political power would be given to a people unprepared for the use of it. In either case the Empire would be threatened with disruption. There was, however, another release from the dilemma, at which Prince Bülow scarcely, or very obscurely, hints, but which finds bolder expression in the historian, Treitschke, who has moulded the political thought and aspirations of the New Empire. He sees the only hope of salvation in —

"A single State, a monarchical Germany under the dynasty of the Hohenzollerns, expulsion of the princely houses, annexation to Prussia." [5]

At the beginning of the twentieth century all seemed fair in Germany, to the eye of the ordinary observer who noted the vast strides that the country had made commercially and industrially, who saw how her capacity for organization was so great. Yet

[4] Von Bülow's *Imperial Germany*, p. 232.

[5] From article in the *Historical Review* for October, 1897, by Dr. J. W. Headlam.

within were "broils festering to rebellion, old laws rotting away with rust in antique sheaths," new forces threatening the consolidation so brilliantly won.

Let us review the foregoing pages briefly. Here is a people, with a history extending over nearly two thousand years, endowed with all the qualities which go to the making of great Empires, save one, the spirit of Imperial unity and the political capacity to make it successful. From time to time they were led conquering by great men — Hermann, Charlemagne, the Ottonid Princes, Frederick Barbarossa — imbued with the Imperial instinct, gifted with creative genius, and with the divine power of awaking the national spirit. These greatly dared and greatly succeeded, but the prizes they won, the edifice they builded, were but transient glories lost in the benumbing and paralysing slough of Separatism. Only a natural strength and valour enabled the race to survive; to make a last effort to rebuild that which had been thrown down. Another ruler appeared after long centuries, himself not great, but happy in his choice of great servants. They together — William I, Bismarck, Moltke, and the rest — conceived the idea of a new Empire and created it by the old method of militarism and war. This Empire became greater than any of its predecessors, more wealthy, more powerful, to all seeming infinitely more harmonious; but even in its majestic structure cracks began to appear. Once again in the long history of Germany, peace threatened to undermine the fabric which blood and iron had cemented.

This time, however, as never before, the rulers and political thinkers were quick to take alarm. History has lessons for the twentieth century which it did not have for the fourteenth. It has become a science, a philosophy; and the historian philosophers,

the military scientists, and the diplomatic statesmen, were not to be caught napping as were their forebears. Was disunion again beginning to manifest itself? Then the forces which had called unity into existence for a term must be brought into action again. The political impotence of the Germanic race must again be offset by potential forces, not political, as in the past. War for conquest would satisfy — or pacify — the discontented and restless elements, as it did in the days of the Crusaders in England; as it did in the days when Henry V went on his mission of conquest to France. Kenneth H. Vickers, in writing of England in the later Middle Ages,[6] says that while many Englishmen condemned Henry's proposed expedition to France, the main argument which influenced the monarch to invade France, apart from his personal ambition, was the knowledge that there was disaffection in his own country:

"Knowing that sedition lurked in secret corners of men's hearts, he determined 'to busy restless minds in foreign quarrels.' He believed, with many other statesmen before and since, that a war would pull the nation together."

That was in a day when war had sanctions which it does not now possess. Germany, in 1914, believed still that it would, as it ever had done, excite the nationalistic spirit of Germany. It was deep-rooted; it was at the core of every German heart. Liberalism was but a name. The people had been fed with its so-called fruits, but they were only the bribes of autocracy to reconcile them to a government which was not a people's government, and to a Parliament in which the people's representatives had no real con-

[6] Oman's *History of England,* Vol. III, chap. xix, p. 350.

trol. The cry of world-power would arouse ambition, stir the blood of a martial race, dissolve party, and for the moment obliterate Socialism. Further, there was a ruler on the throne, restless, eager, instinct with pride of race and family, steeped in the traditions of his people, worshipping at the shrine of its past glories and heroes, cherishing with deepest reverence his great inheritance, impatiently, blindly, honestly resolute to pass it on to his successors in greater splendour. "The Day" came at the bidding of the militarists with the Kaiser at their head. Not France, or Austria, or Denmark, or Hanover, or Poland, was the ultimate object of attack this time, but England. From England's Empire, after Russia and France had been maimed, modern Germany would gather new strength to go on, new territory, new power, and new glory. In doing so her people would reunite their forces, disintegration would be stayed, democratic advance would be smothered in national pride and conquest; for another generation at least the autocracy of the throne and the power of the Junker would be strengthened. The spirit of nationality would hush the voices of internal discord; stem any effective movement towards Liberalism; regalvanize the Empire; prevent the work of 1870 from sharing the fate of the work of the earlier empire-makers of Germany. It was a logical policy, and it was worked out with consummate skill once the end was fixed. The great system of war organization slowly outspread till it covered every phase of the national life. It was a colossal thing which had to be done, and a colossal implement was manufactured to do the work. The million little things perfected made the one big thing a prodigious engine of assault. Science, logic, ceaseless industry and

skilful methods gave such a result that the world only saw in armies of millions of men — fathers, brothers, sons — a hideous machine moving with awful exactness upon old battlefields, implacable, desolating, inhuman in its grim precision.

CHAPTER II

THE KAISER AND HIS POLICY

FORTY-FIVE years have passed since the Franco-Prussian War, and William II has occupied the throne of Prussia and been German Emperor for more than half that time. It is, therefore, impossible to realize German policy or arrive at an understanding of German purposes without taking into account his character and personality, his constitutional position, and his power practically exercised in the State during all that time. When, in 1888, William, already called the War Lord, ascended the throne, he was regarded as a peril to the peace of Europe; and German apologists have of late declared that the best proof of Germany's peaceful intentions was the fact that, despite prophecy, the Kaiser had kept the sword sheathed during all that period.

It would be estimating Germany and its ruler too lightly to assume that they would have gone to war willingly with this country, or with France or Russia, at any time since 1875, until four or five years ago. Indeed, it is quite certain that so far as an attack on this country is concerned, a further delay to give time for increased naval development would have been welcome. Had circumstances been different; had not the internal conditions of both France and England been of such a nature as to suggest complete unreadiness and unwillingness for war; had it not been a conviction of the Kaiser's Government that we would not enter the present conflict, there can be no doubt

that Germany would have hesitated before striking the great blow which was to decide the future of Europe for many a long day. It was her design to take France and Russia first, and ourselves afterwards. That is the testimony of her own frank commentators, who in their disdain, and because they despised us, thought they could say it boldly and to our confusion.

It was essential to her vast ambition and purposes that Germany should be powerful, commercially and industrially; that she should have stored wealth and resources; have secured stability of finance, a world-wide mercantile marine, a powerful navy, and an army of such size and efficiency as could represent a two-power standard, before she loosed her formidable engine of aggression upon the world. As things turned out there is no doubt that this war came too soon, in one sense, for Germany's designs; but the time and the incidents of contemporary European history were so favourable that she could well waive the increased strength and power which would come from a few more years' waiting, and stake all on the hazard. She did so, and in attempting to trace the tragedy back to its source, the Kaiser must ever be kept in mind.

It is impossible to dissociate his personality, his speeches and his actions from the policy of his country; and this must be said frankly, that his policy and himself are the nation. They are not separate or detached, but are one and indivisible in sympathy and in action where this war is concerned. No ruler of the modern world has ever so completely possessed and controlled both the political and social forces of his country, or the admiration, and, indeed, the affections of his people, as William II has done. Parties exist in the State, but the legislative policy is

that of the Kaiser. There is the Chancellor as active statesman in the Reichstag, but really only the mouthpiece of the Kaiser. In any modern democratic party sense there are no leaders, there is no Prime Minister; the Kaiser is the fountain of legislative inspiration, the practical arbiter of legislative action. The Sovereign has the power of absolute veto on the decisions of the two Chambers of the Diet, whose performances in a parliamentary sense are little more than those of the defunct Federal Council of Australia, which, before the Commonwealth union, passed laws not binding on the Governments of the different provinces.

There is no initiative in a German Parliament; there is no real responsibility; it affords opportunity for criticism; no more. Ministerial responsibility to Parliament is a myth. Bismarck himself said that there was no legal redress against ministers, that the country and Parliament could only say, "You have acted incapably, not to say stupidly." The Crown appoints and dismisses ministers, and the Chancellor is merely the *alter ego* politically of the Kaiser, even when he appears to criticize his master in the Reichstag. William II, unlike some of his predecessors, has the astuteness to know when to appease the public which has some real or fancied grievance against himself. He carefully prepares his own sackcloth and ashes, as was the case after the *Daily Telegraph* interview, when his Chancellor let him down very carefully in the Reichstag, while William ruefully, yet cynically, waited for the storm to pass; but he never forgave Prince Bülow for the terms in which his penitence was expressed.

German impatience with the Kaiser has never been very real, as may be judged from the fact that, since 1888, there has never been an attempt to readjust the

position of the ruler and his subjects in the Constitution. The Kaiser makes policy, and he carries out policy; his Parliament can advise, can meddle, can retard, but, according to the present interpretation of the Constitution, it can do no more. He performs the double function of being his own Prime Minister, initiating legislation and exercising the power of veto at the same time. The franchise shuts out masses of the people from representation, while the Junkers control the Prussian Diet. It in turn controls the Reichstag despite manhood-suffrage, which is supposed to give it democratic character. The system within the system neutralizes all democratic power in the German Parliament. That member of the Reichstag who said, "The man who compared this House to a Hall of Echoes was not far wrong," made a just criticism on a paradoxical situation.

A powerful writer in the *Quarterly Review* for the first quarter of 1871, says:

"The mistake apt to be made on this side of the Channel about the political career of Bismarck is that of unconsciously crediting Prussia with the Parliamentary precedents and traditions of England. But the most cherished Prussian traditions and precedents have always been those of military monarchy and aristocracy. These have always been associated from first to last with all her modern advances in the scale of nations. . . . The organization of the army, due to Frederick William I and Frederick II, had begirt the throne with a military aristocracy founded on a landed basis, and which has not been taken off that basis by the modern reforms of the system. This has preserved that species of modern feudalism in the Prussian army which regards the obligation of loyalty to the Crown as paramount to that of allegiance to any paper or parliamentary constitution."

That was true in the time of Frederick the Great, it was true even in the days of 1813, when a so-called

Liberalism had its birth in Prussia, as Bismarck announced in his maiden speech in the Prussian United Diet in 1847. On that occasion he repudiated the idea that the great movement of that day had anything to do with "the popular claims for a constitution," and declared it to be simply a national movement for redeeming the country from the shame of 1806 and for freeing it from "the disgrace of a foreign yoke."

The brilliant writer in the *Quarterly* quotes Count Rehberg, a Hanoverian statesman, as saying at the beginning of the last century, that "Prussia is not a country that possesses an army, but an army which possesses a country"; and M. Cherbuliez, a French writer, as declaring that "The Prussian Government sets its Chambers at defiance, because, in Prussia, there is nothing solid in the shape of institutions save the administration and the army."

The Junkers who fought the Constitution of Frederick William IV would undoubtedly abolish it today; but failing that they bend it to their will with the help of the Kaiser. Who, in our day, ever asks what the German Parliament is doing? The question has been always, What is the Kaiser doing? We have heard more of late years of the influence of the Russian Duma than of the acts of the German Reichstag. The Reichstag has played a small part in the history of modern Germany. The same class of men with Bismarck at their head, who, to build up a great army secretly in 1865, made the constitution a scrap of paper by refusing to submit a budget, are in power today. At their head is a sovereign who does not hesitate to dissolve his Parliament, as he did in 1893, if he wants money and it hesitates to give it to him. William II keeps his head while doing this; Charles I

lost his. More than once the Kaiser has, in his speeches, set the army above Parliament:

"The soldier and the army and not parliamentary majorities and resolutions have welded together the German Empire. My confidence is fixed on the army."

That is the mediæval attitude, but it was not mere phrasing or mere impulse. It was the echo of his once beloved and finally-rejected master, Bismarck, who, however, took good care not to say such things publicly. William's first proclamation on coming to the throne was to the army; only three days later did he incline himself towards his people and, in a pedantic proclamation to the Prussian nation, bless them also. To do all this required courage and a strong will, and the Kaiser has both. It is an immense personality, with a temperament of fatal characteristics, balanced to some degree, however, by a real practical ability. That ability is, however, all too often controlled by rashness and impulse. More than all it is crippled by self-approval and the unhappy belief that its possessor alone has the secret of doing things; from composing an opera to extemporizing a sermon or a speech,— and he does it with skill, readiness and rhetoric — upsetting the diplomacy of Europe, designing the sculptural monstrosities of the Siegesallée, giving a new turn to military or naval strategy, setting new fashions in tailoring or moustaches, conducting a theatrical performance, advising on domestic affairs, or passing the word what the people must read and the newspapers say. He can deceive, too. The inculcation of the usefulness of lying has been a feature of his day as Emperor, as Sir Valentine Chirol has shown in an article in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1914, in which he says:

"During my ten days' stay in the German capital, I spent many hours in the Wilhelmstrasse studying diplomatic documents, put before me as 'extremely confidential,' of which I need say no more than that I am now satisfied they had been deliberately and grossly garbled for my better edification."

If the conception of a so-called constitutional ruler is power and the aggrandizement of his dynasty, secured by a wonderful army and strong navy, in a country whose pride of conquest and advance got by conquest is great, then militarism and its evils are bound to flourish and ambition for national glory will bemuse the minds of a people. Then it is possible for a monarch to say, as the Kaiser did confidently say:

"It is my business alone to decide if there shall be war. . . . The more I get behind party cries and party considerations, the more firmly and surely do I count on my army and the more definitely do I hope that my army, whether abroad or at home, will follow my wishes. . . . The soldier has not to have a will of his own; you must all, indeed, have one will, but that is my will; there is only one law, and that is my law."

Bismarck reduced all this to an axiom when, with his rare gift of phrase, he said, "So it is throughout civil life: the soldier is everything, the civilian just what remains."

The Kaiser is in short the throne and the power behind the throne; and his policy has been independent enough to warrant the term original, though the wisdom of the originality is now being searchingly and critically tested. It had its advent on the day when he dropped the great pilot who had steered Germany through heavy seas with skill and insight, and with a mind as astute as it was unscrupu-

lous, as witty as, politically, it was wanton. Bismarck was never rash, and therein, with his vision, his wisdom and his craft, lay his power. His satirical remark to a famous British statesman now dead illustrates his contempt for rash adventures. In a certain year of last century he made the mordant comment that, "The wild steeds of French policy are once more galloping through the sands of Tunis, and hard galloping they find it."

Bismarck's policy had been to develop Germany, commercially and industrially; to make her rich and secure internally, to give her, as he said, "a backbone of iron and ribs of gold"; and the process proceeded with the most consummate organization under his firm and steady hand. His idea was to secure commercial domination wherever possible in the world and, having secured that, in some opportune and perhaps distant hour, impose political domination; but political domination within the German Empire was his first and constant thought. With pure Brandenburger pride and ambition he was determined that Germany should be ruled by Prussia; that it should be disciplined, dragooned, organized and inspired by the idea that the State was all and the individual nothing save the servant of the State, born to make the State glorious even at the sacrifice of himself in the unit or in the mass; and that the German Empire should be the nucleus of a great European Confederation ruled by Prussia. The idea prevailed. Germany was practically Prussianized as a whole, and when the present Emperor came to the throne he was in an atmosphere of Prussian pride and ambition which had penetrated even to jealous and reluctant Bavaria. But Prussian materialism, pride and ambition, would not have found the terrible expression of this moment had it not been for the

Kaiser, had Bismarck's cautious and conservative policy been continued. An imposing historical parallel to the Kaiser's career may be found in that of a monarch of two hundred years ago. Every student must have been struck by the strange likeness between the policies, and most of all, perhaps, between the men responsible for the wars of 1702-13 and those of 1914. In Louis Quatorze, there is the young man taking in his own hands the power created by Richelieu and Mazarin and thenceforth ruling in lonely absolutism. "I will be my own Prime Minister," said the grand monarch, and Colbert becomes a collector of taxes. Like Wilhelm, Louis must have a place in the sun. He becomes *Le Roi Soleil*, building and beautifying with lavish expenditure; "overcoming the Pyrenees" to reach at Spain's colonial dominions; scheming and planning aggression through long years; fomenting civil war in England as a means to an end; ignoring or crushing internal grumblings; piling up taxes on his people; posing as the divinely appointed instrument; pursuing ambitions which unite Europe against him and in the end shatter the great edifice he has erected. For Mazarin, read Bismarck, for Colbert, read Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, and little is left to alter.

From boyhood, William was a dreamer, but a dreamer of the selfish, material, grandiose type, with intellect powerful enough to make him, with his opportunities, a great force, and with a personality of singular impressiveness. It was clear from the start that, European war or no European war, a mediæval greed of power was the desire of his heart. He was a spangler from the beginning; though sometimes he assumed the rôle of modesty, which merely provided a background for outbreaks of passionate

declaration that he was made a gift to the world and set upon a throne, so that with the blessing of Providence Germany should exalt herself and save the world by her ideals.

For the last quarter of a century the doctrine has been preached sedulously by German leaders of thought that the modern German Empire must renew the glories of the ancient German Empire by force of conquest; by the valour of the magnificent "blond beast lustfully roving in search of booty and victory," as Nietzsche, in his new nationalism, put it. It was declared that the inheritance of the ages was theirs; that Germany was the only nation which could influence the world for its own good; that the British Empire, decadent, sodden, incapable, had done nothing to justify its place in the world, got by robbery; that it must be displaced to make way for a German Empire; and that a German Empire would establish a new world-life, world-thought, and world-aspiration. Culture and the sword; this was the basis of the policy; material progress to make the power behind the sword; this has been the ideal cherished and nourished by the German people: and the present conflict is the result of a soulless materialism.

Is this mere rhetoric? From the day William II came to the throne he has been obsessed by the idea that he is a special and chosen instrument of Heaven to speak to his people and to the world through his people. Born under the banners of a brand new Empire which was self-made, bravely made, and as showy as a parvenu; placed higher than all other men in the world, save the negligible King of England and the isolated Tsar of Russia, William still saw himself lacking in the dominions and colonies possessed by those lesser than himself — like the ruler of these

islands, who did not know how to manage an Empire, to give it a policy, to make it a blessing to the world. He preached the doctrine that only through himself, a sacredly inspired agent, could Germany be made supreme; that only through Germany could the world rise to summits of a true civilization and rid itself of the smother of an incubus called the British Empire. He has himself provided an ever-watchful and interested, not to say admiring, world with the *motif* of his grand opera of dominion; has provided a portrait of himself painted by himself, revealing the inner working of a nature as unusual, as varied, as adroit, able and — because of his autocratic position in the constitution — dangerous, as the representatives of any modern dynasties, at least, show.

On March 6th, 1890, when unveiling the statue of the Grand Elector at Bielefeld, the Kaiser said:

"Each Prince of the Hohenzollern House is always aware that he is only a minister on earth, that he must give account of his work to a supreme King and Master, and that he must faithfully accomplish the task ordained for him by an order from on High."

This is either pure incantation, the cry of the fanatical mystic, the assumption of the impostor, or the utterance of a great actor with a very real purpose, intent to mislead. It cannot be attributed alone to his undoubted love of literature of a rhetorical type, which, as his old tutor, M. Ayme,[1] has said, showed itself early and was a real taste and inclination. To a nature so ardent and vocal, the purple patches in literature would appeal; they would have an undoubted influence on its expression; but the Kaiser's mediæval cymbal-clashing was stimulated by the pomp of place, the ordered spectacle of a

[1] Stanley Shaw's *William of Germany.*

great army ready to die with his name on their lips, as they have done, indeed, in the day of battle; and the constant clamour of the Camarilla for the march to the German Marathon. A nation, or what looked like it, united to transpose the music of a naturally plangent nature into a noise that woke up and kept awake the Chancelleries of Europe. Generosity and tolerance might attribute such utterances as that just quoted to a highly excited imagination and a young enthusiast's obsession, but twenty-five years after he came to the throne William repeated his "divine right" theory and announced his sacredly inspired mission. On August 25th, 1910, at Königsberg, this was his declaration:

"Regarding myself as a tool of the Lord, without consideration for the notions and opinions of the day, I go my way."

To say the least, that is a statement of remarkable confidence and assurance; but eighteen years before this, in 1892, to the Brandenburg Diet, he had already revealed the especially select origin of himself and his forebears thus:

"God has taken so much trouble with the House of Brandenburg that He will not desert us now."

Of late the world has come to think that God did not take sufficient trouble with the House of Brandenburg, if it must be judged by the leadership of the Kaiser, who takes as his exemplar that notorious but not approved figure of history, Attila, whose chief gift, apart from sheer military prowess, not, it is understood, possessed by his imitator, was sacking towns and murdering helpless civil populations. But the stones and ashes of many a Belgian and French town prove that the Kaiser has well sustained

some of the traditions of "the blond beast lustfully roving" of bygone days. The matter is important enough to warrant the reference, for it has received full support in the history of the present war, made hideous by the rejection of the laws of humanity and by a cruelty the more loathsome because of the age in which we live; not the age of the Inquisition, of hanging for the stealing of a sheep, of mutilation for an offence against the law — the method of the Mahdi in the Soudan. The Mahdi, the Khalifa, the Mad Mullah, Attila, Alva and Tilly, each inspired their armies with energy, courage, and the love of loot, lust and cruelty; and the last monarch of the Brandenburgs has been able to do the same.

On July 30th, 1900, so the London *Times* reported — it quotes from the *Weser Zeitung* of Bremen — William said:

"Let all who fall into your hands be at your mercy. Just as the Huns a thousand years ago, under the leadership of Attila, gained a reputation in virtue of which they still live in historical tradition, so may the name of Germany become known in such a manner in China that no Chinaman will ever even dare look askance at a German."

The Kaiser always meant what he said, when thus admonishing his people and his army. The world has mistaken him in this. All these long years he has stood in his shop-window, flourished his sword and declaimed in "shining armour," which was his figure of speech in announcing that he and Francis-Joseph were brothers in arms — Francis-Joseph being the victim of the embrace; but the world cried "Showman!" and made due allowance. He addressed the Tsar of Russia as "The Lord of the Pacific," and himself as "The Lord of the Atlantic"; and Great Britain shrugged its shoulders, though in

the circle of Prussian militarism great and sincere applause greeted his declarations. He was the mouthpiece of the war-makers. The showy and careful rhetoric of his utterances did its work with the German people. That was what the Junkers wanted. The Kaiser was a first-class herald; a great missioner, a successful commercial traveller for Prussian war-wares. The average person outside Germany regarded it all as a part of the organized effort of the *nouveau riche* among the nations to draw attention to itself, to summon the world to mark its wonderful progress — and it was wonderful progress, and the Kaiser had a right to be proud of that at least. The Anglo-Saxon world, however, had a half-cynical good-humoured smile for it all; tolerance refused to see menace in the rainbow or storm-cloud phrases.

There were those, however, who knew; who realized the exact truth. To them the Kaiser was more than a great advertising agent; than a Bombastes Furioso. He was a man, loving his country next to himself, with an insatiable ambition and commendable energy; with the maggot of German predominance in his brain. His was a brain of a highly modern type, with a nervous system behind it most sensitively, not to say over-sensitively, strung; with romanticism rooted in him, but with a practical quality which would make it fit in with all sordid material purposes; with an iron will to hold it there, and, as Bismarck said, without a heart. With him, one fad, or pursuit of theory, gave way to another with lightning rapidity, but each was sustained by unflagging energy and adroitness while it lasted. Quick at assimilation, abnormal in seizing superficial points, absorbing like a sponge, studious without being scholarly, mad to apply science without a

deep knowledge of science, determined to be the inspiring centre, the magnetic battery for a whole people — in every department of life William II has expended himself without acute judgment, sometimes with rashness, yet with momentarily passing shrewdness, and always with an engaging showiness, mental display and grim determination. His egotism, however, has been his bane. He has failed to choose great men who could make him still greater by their knowledge and wise support. Instead of calling upon experienced statesmen to do the work of statesmanship, with all the political organization and the spread of policy which it involves, William, in fact, if not constitutionally, has been his own Prime Minister, his own heads of departments. He has been political preacher and propagandist, commercial editor and manager, Draconian lawgiver, diplomatist and social doctor of the nation.

Maximilian Harden, in his book, *Monarchs and Men,* speaks thus of the Kaiser's absolute and personal rule:

"When will the Bismarck drama become historical and take its place in the German myths, to which the pain of fresh experience adds daily? When the error which turned it into a sad catastrophe is set right; when the maturing Emperor of the Germans banishes, as he once banished his most loyal servant, the illusion that he can rule alone. No monarch can now rule alone. He must, however brilliant be his endowment, think himself fortunate if he can, without shirking his duty, unburden himself of the responsibility for the colossal machine."

Restless, exuberant, sharp as a street Arab, primitive in his vanity as a music-hall actress, ungrateful to those who served him — dropping them like hot po-

tatoes when his need was over — surrounded by sycophants, lured by dragoons into deeper depths of militarism, the Kaiser has always had, however, one persistent idea — the aggrandizement of his country, its control of the councils of the world, its power to swing civilization to a Prussian centre. However much he fluttered, vapouring from idea to idea, "Deutschland über alles" was ever ringing in his brain; and his magnetic personality and devotion to his ambition gained for him the loyalty of a people in whom ideas are ever carried to the end with terrible and unwavering logic.

Absolutism in the Kaiser has had a long and successful run. Caprivi, Hohenlohe, Bülow, Bethmann-Hollweg have all been puppets, not leaders, and without statesmen guiding the policy of parties, with a ruler who controls a Parliament, democracy has had no real opportunity in Germany. When a Reichstag objected to the Kaiser's policy, it was sent to the country, where Nationalism, the Navy, German predominance was ever the cry; and on a wave of Chauvinism the Kaiser got his way, in spite of a sullen democracy and a powerful Socialistic party. The cry of future gain by German predominance was the lure; the world converted by a huge military and naval organization — Germany stretching from the North Sea to the Mediterranean, and westward to the Atlantic, was now the outspoken or now the whispered hope: and again the Emperor, resourceful, buoyant, domineering, celebrated, had his way. He was a spectacular figure in the world, and his people loved him for it.

When he wanted more money for defence, when he was annoyed and dismayed by the opposition to increase of the army and extension of the two years' military service, he declared confidently, arrogantly,

like any party demagogue in power, that "He would smash the opposition"; which he did. The Kaiser's attitude to his people has been consistently patriarchal and Olympian — at once beneficent and tyrannical. As an instance, let us recall his speech to a deputation of the Agricultural League on February 18th, 1896. On that occasion he said:

"In the desire of helping yourselves . . . you allowed yourselves to be drawn last year into an agitation of words and writings beyond all permissible limits, which profoundly wounded me in my paternal love of the people. To-day, however, like the East Prussians, you have made me forget your fault."

It reads like the speech of some Oriental potentate of past days, this magnificent assumption of absolutism in a democratic world. The power of life and death, the terror of authority, the benevolence of a father, the judgment of a supreme Cadi speaks in his words. It was the heaven-born oracular; and the crushed agriculturists bowed their heads and passed on again to their troubles unrelieved. Kaiserism in the hands of a master taught them to have obedience and faith if they could not have content or justice.

Fascinated by his advertisement of their common country and his glittering personality, believing that the path which William was treading would lead them to an Imperial predominance, the majority of his people have exhibited in their devotion the same spirit which Prince Henry showed when he was sent to the Far East in 1897 as Admiral in command of a second German Cruiser Division. It was then his august brother said to him:

"If any one dares to interfere with our good right, ride in with the mailed fist," and Prince Henry replied, in these monumental words: "Neither gold

nor laurels attract me. . . . My one desire is to proclaim the gospel of your sacred person in foreign parts."

The Kaiser does not stand upon the ground of democratic advance and peaceful development. War and the achievements of war, a fatuous worship of the Brandenburgers and their military history, have been behind all that he has done. Future war was ever in his mind, as the world now knows.

He has been devoid of any real sympathy with democracy. His chief idea has been to keep it in order. On May 14th, 1889, he was good enough to say, in addressing a body of workmen, that he took a lively interest in their class. He exhorted the miners to abstain from all connection with political parties, especially with the Socialists, and he added:

"As soon as I see disorders tending toward Socialism, I shall employ strong measures to repress them; and as the power of which the Government disposes is considerable, the authors of the least disturbance against the authorities will be pitilessly shot."

The world outside Germany now is aware of the true nature of German policy and character, and it is needless to comment extensively upon it at this point, but one or two further comments may be made. Apologists for the Kaiser and this war have taken offence at the charge made against Germany, that she is not as truly democratic as Russia in her government to-day; but has ever the Tsar Nicholas — called an autocrat and a tyrant by the Germans — made proclamation to his people as ruthless as that contained in the foregoing passage, or in the following:

"If I ever dream that Social-Democratic opinions are concerned in the agitation among the working people of this coun-

try, I will intervene with unrelenting vigour and bring to bear against such opinions the full powers that I possess."

The declaration that he, not his Government, will exercise these powers of repression; that he, not the will of his people, will suppress Social Democracy, is enough in itself to show how far removed from modern responsible and representative Government is the administration at Berlin. There is no country in the world where such language could be used by a ruler with impunity. As was said in the previous chapter, political capacity is feeble in Germany, and with the system of veiled absolutism which exists so it would ever be. Politics as they are understood in the United States, France, Italy, or England, are not known or understood in Germany. Has ever a visitor to that country heard party politics discussed privately, and as part of the everyday life, as they are in other democratic countries? Parties do not make politics in Germany; the Kaiser is the author of all policies. There is comment in the Reichstag, but there is no control of the Executive, and the Constitution permits an almost complete despotism in essentials of administration and legislation.

If the Kaiser has been so ruthlessly impatient with democracy over the long years, alternately chastening it and soothing it, giving it enormous bribes in the way of social reform, but checking it in all political development, he has been at times equally impatient with his nobility, and they have come under his "mailed fist" more than once. Addressing his nobles on September 6th, 1894, he said:

"I have been profoundly distressed to notice that in the circles of the nobility near me, my best intentions have been misunderstood, and some have been criticized — I have even

heard of opposition to them. Gentlemen, the opposition of Prussian nobles to their King is monstrous. Opposition can only be justified when it has the King at its head; the history of our House teaches us that."

He had his way. There were no Runnymede barons among them. We describe as an autocrat the ruler who disregards the advice and ignores the opposition of his councillors; but what name shall be applied to the ruler who tells his councillors that they must offer no advice of which he does not approve, that they must oppose no measure unless it is opposed by the King? Autocracy may have gone further than this, but obliquity of mind and fatuous misconception seldom if ever. It was the voice of 1400 in the year of our Lord 1894. Had the Kaiser been speaking on behalf of the people against the nobles his words might seem less incongruous to modern ears; but William II has been at no pains to conceal his isolation from the people, and his entrenchment in the bosom of an armed force which is as much a weapon to defend the House of Hohenzollern as to serve the military needs and the aggressive purposes of his country. The army was his home, his retreat from both democracy and aristocracy. In a world where the mere struggle for existence grows keener and more pitiless every day; where the adjustment of the relations between reward and toil is so difficult, needing the devotion of all who lead; when social reform is the demand of modern existence, militarism was and is the refuge of the Brandenburger!

In 1894 the Kaiser made a speech which reveals his own inner conception of his office, and shows how distant he is from any co-operation with or conception of democracy. The throne first and before

all in his mind, then the people; on the old assumption, long since repudiated by democratic nations, that the salvation of the people lies in the functions of the throne and the benevolence and the wisdom of its occupant:

"With deep sorrow did I take up the crown. One thing alone believed in me — it was the army; and supported by it, and relying on our God as of old, I undertook my heavy office, knowing well that the army was the main support of the country, the main pillar of the Prussian throne."

Prince Hohenlohe tells how William, then Crown Prince, sided with the soldier clique which, for its own aggrandizement, sought to thwart his own kindly efforts to soften the rigour of German rule in Alsace-Lorraine, and "shared the view of the military that Frenchmen must be roughly treated." [2] The ever-present, unlovely reciprocity of the army and the Emperor has its origin in a sense of tyranny, hardness and harshness common to both.

It is not thus that the rulers of England and America speak and act. The main pillar of their position in the State is the faith and confidence of a free, peace-loving, peace-ensuing people.

To complete the logical sequence of the clauses of the Kaiser's policy of Kingship and Government, one last reference. On August 31st, 1897, unveiling a monument of his grandfather at Coblenz, and speaking of William I, he said — and he has said the same thing many times since:

"He was an instrument chosen by God, and he knew it. For us all, and especially for us Princes, he raised and made to shine most brilliantly a jewel which we must reverence and hold as sacred — *Kingship by Divine Right.*"

[2] Memoirs. Vol. II, p. 387

Napoleon himself, floated on a tide of militarism from the position of a subaltern unable to pay his laundry bill to the greatest throne in the world, never arrogated to himself such high authority and direct inspiration from on high, though he was a prince of rhetoricians, with, however, living genius behind all. Though unreasonable and out of tune with Anglo-Saxon views of the functions of a sovereign, of any properly constituted control of a nation, the Kaiser's words were in tune with the temper of the German people. Since 1864 to the present day they have marched with an accumulating record of three successful wars, carried through by a Hohenzollern, stimulating them, and impelling them towards the promised fruits of another vast war, to be made glorious for Germany by the success of their arms and the rewards of their ambitions. These rewards should be the territories and the savings of other nations.

For over a quarter of a century the German Emperor, in sonorous speeches of a common model of oratorical force, and in many acts of an apparently spectacular kind — in reality of a deep and ominous character — has given to the world his own political portrait. To history may be left the difficult analysis of his complex character; it is here enough to consider briefly his personality and to uncover certain springs of his conduct as disclosed in his plangent speeches, so nakedly outspoken, so much couched in the language of a very minor prophet, of a Jean Paul Richter or a Phineas T. Barnum. Nevertheless, however much his policy, purposes, and character may be criticized, the world is profoundly conscious that for a quarter of a century a virile and attractive intellect, a practical, capable and wilful character, and a sanguine nature of unwhole-

some egotism, stimulated by unsound theories of government and false ideals of nationality, have been at work in Europe; and that a formidable and resourceful personality mounted the German throne on the fifteenth of June, 1888.

CHAPTER III

MIGHT IS RIGHT AND WAR IS THE GERMAN GOOD

BEFORE attempting to inquire closely into the nature of the mission to which the Kaiser and his country committed themselves soon after Bismarck's fall, it would be well to consider some of the forces that inspired and supported the Napoleonic ambition of the twentieth century, which, however, as Mr. Bonar Law said in Parliament, has no Napoleon. If there is a citizen of the earth that is vocal it is the German. He has always thrived on great cries, and made progress only when he has had great men to lead him. He is, and has always been the slave of an intellectual system. The support of a code of thought has been indispensable to his development; he has relied on pedagogy in every branch of his life, as no other citizen of the world has done. He cannot live without his dogma and his precedent; and it has been part of his prodigious strength, in combination with his fellows, that he is as loyal and devoted, not to say subservient, to a theory as he is to his Kaiser. He is personally and he is nationally self-conscious, and the national self-consciousness has made him morbid in ambition; he has ever been on the lookout for international slights; he has been alert and determined to give Germany the power to call the tune to the nations; he has been more concerned for the State, and his honour as involved in the State, than for the development of the individual; than for the common good made greater through the devotion and the sacrifice of the individ-

ual, by adjusting one man's needs and views to those of another. He has definitely rejected the creed of the Prussian patriot reformers of the early part of the nineteenth century who were inspired for the moment at least by Kant's dogmatic appeal: "The highest for all men is duty, and the greatest possession in the world is the moral will."

The present-day German is the victim of the formula of thought and conduct to which he commits himself; and he is often massacred by his own remorseless logic. It makes him fanatical, it renders him ruthless, but it gives him courage for the frontal attack. The end must be his because it ought to be his by his rules of logic. So in this war the soldier has blindly flung himself against impossible positions, because he is a slave to his texts. He defies the opinion of the civilized world; he spurns those whom he wants to support him,— witness his fury with the Americans when they do not approve of his conduct in defying recognized laws of war because they do not fit in with his need — and he announces the certainty of his success before he has begun to win it, simply because what he wills should be and therefore must be. It is the Will to Power. It is also the way of the blunderer; but when it is associated with perfection of system, with miracles of organization, with infatuation and courage, its burning ploughshares can furrow a world with agony and ruin before it can be checked. In proportion, therefore, as the German people are inspired by men and watchwords — or catchwords — they are formidable because they have many qualities which are supreme in their effectiveness. Without the men and the formulæ they sink into inaction and forceless incapacity politically and nationally. They did so in the period between Frederick the Great's death

and the regeneration of the beginning of the nineteenth century, and again in that period which immediately preceded the rise of Bismarck and Moltke.

The influence of Frederick the Great has been far more extensive than his greatest admirers, including Carlyle, avow. Discipline, precision, exactness, energy, devotion to detail, and plodding persistency were the characteristics of Frederick's great army, and it was the controlling and pervasive influence in all the life of Prussia of his day. All these qualities massed together, directed by a powerful and unwavering mind for an especial purpose, produced an enormous engine of power and an equally enormous scheme of national activity in a thousand directions, which is the source and inspiration of German efficiency to-day. It did not mean initiative or that research which leads to discovery, because even Frederick's military strategy was tolerably simple and uncomplicated, but it did mean that throughout the whole social organism of Prussia there passed something singularly harmonious with the character of the people. Energy without vision, power without sympathy, the ceaseless industry of the treadmill and the care of the usurer, did not make for political freedom, for social adaptability, or for that consideration which is necessary in a world where nations as well as people differ; but some of the German professors have been right when, with another purpose and in a somewhat different meaning, they have said in effect that militarism, that is, the army and the army at war, has made German culture what it is.

Now that German culture has taken the course with which we are all familiar, it is quite possible to agree with the apologists; but it is not in this sense that Frederick the Great and his system can be traced

in the prosperity, industry and the noble energy of Germany to-day. Organization was Frederick's obsession for a lifetime, and he laid the foundations of an organized national life which, while declining with his successor, still was enough a part of the fibre of the nation to make Stein, Hardenburg, Gneisenau and Scharnhorst, supreme organizers all of them, natural products of Prussian life. If for a generation after these laboured in the zenith of their day, Prussia again sank back somewhat through lack of strong men at the head of affairs and through an ingrain political ineptitude; the instinct and tendency were all there ready to the hand of Bismarck and that greatest of all organizers, Von Roon, to inoculate a nation with the old love of system, unremitting industry and the application of science to that industry. Through every department of Prussian life these qualities, born of the discipline of Prussian arms, passed. Every university organized its work always with a view to fitting it in with the practical ambitions and developments of the nation. The State, that is, the army, made of the professors as it were social and national drill instructors, and every university was in some sense a barracks. At the same time it was not a dry mechanism and sordid scheme; the whole system was lambent, and the flame was fed constantly by the State, and by its leaders with an intense spirit of nationalism, a continuous celebration of the deeds of Germans in the far past and of Prussians in the near present. The pressure behind it all gave stimulus to a spirit noble as powerful when devoted to great ends, still powerful and glowing when addressed to evil ends.

All this, however effective in producing material progress and a plodding skill, which may have little to do with capacity for the higher ranges of human

effort, does not make a nation great; if it is joined to blind national self-assertion and a strange, doomed belief that the nation has a mission for imposing its own special scheme of civilization upon the rest of the world, nothing but disaster can ensue. Studiousness, even a splendid studiousness, and great investigating power, a love of philosophy and a language which lends itself to sonorous oratory, have tended to produce in Germany what is called intellectual obfuscation. Not to the statesmen of such a nation is given the Cortez eye, nor to those who serve him is given that sensibility joined to principle, necessary to successful internal politics, to say nothing of external policies.

In brief, the splendid organization of the German nation to-day is in essence military. It is an inheritance without a real break in the chain of succession from the middle of the eighteenth century. It has produced a vast mechanism of all departments of the nation's life, wonderful in its detail and efficiency; but it has also produced a mind which is essentially military and Frederician, the abject slave of the big thing. It bends the knee to the 17-inch gun, the maritime leviathan, the Brobdignagian statue, the prodigious opera with its sensuous storm and agony of sound, until the Monstrous Thing has become an ideal and an idol.

In the Kaiser the Germans of this generation had their man — their great man to their mind, their powerful leader to the mind of all the world; and in the cry of World Power or Downfall, of victory by the virtue and valour of the Super-race, they had what Americans call their slogan. The Kaiser, who is religious in an Old Testament sense, who has more in common with Saul than with Paul, forever celebrating the fame and glory of Germany, could not

have set his people throbbing with the idea of conquest had there not been at hand the instruments for national propaganda. He had an army of editors and professors, of schoolmen and publicists, of orators and soldiers, everywhere preaching the doctrine of " more room, more territory, more power."

There was the " All-German " League, founded in 1891, which soon achieved a membership of about half a million of the " best minds of the country," publishing " catechisms " and books in which the doctrine of aggression and war, in order to acquire dominion and to impose German ideals upon the world, was sedulously preached. It was supported by numerous other Societies working in special phases of the far-reaching policy, while it had as a powerful ally the Navy League, the membership of which was enormous, and the preachment of which was a navy large enough to enforce German influence in successful, and ultimately overwhelming, competition with English naval power. The strength and popularity of all these societies grew until in the Moroccan difficulty in 1911, the German representative was, with sly malice, able to say to the French and British diplomatists, " We don't want war, but public opinion in Germany is ' nervous,' and may easily get out of hand."

The spirit which made the colossal preparations possible, confident and voluntary, had been stimulated by such men as Treitschke, Nietzsche, Clausewitz, and Von der Golz, and if the big Germanic movement is to be understood all of them must be read in conjunction with the Kaiser's speeches and the innumerable books published on war in Germany year by year.

We are told by more than one critic at this moment that people are writing about Treitschke and

Nietzsche who never heard of them before the war, and cannot even spell their names now.[1] No doubt this is true; but there are those who have been familiar with the essential teachings of both men for years, and certainly they have the advantage now of good English translations. These allow us all to get a grip of Treitschke's philosophy as distinct from his history, and his main theme in that philosophy, namely, the Doctrine of Valour and War. Long before this war broke out such watchful and German-wise students as Dr. J. W. Headlam,[2] had drawn the attention of the British people to the trend of his writings. No doubt there is much loose talk about, and some unfair criticism of, Treitschke and Nietzsche, but on the whole they are not being misrepresented by English writers to-day. The texts of their theories are household words throughout Germany, and we have heard them declaimed sufficiently to grasp their significance.

Herr Treitschke was the historian turned rhapsodist and militarist, with the practical Semitic vision and a material sense which could translate ideals into good coin of concrete use. He and the myriad lesser ones laboured effectively in his day, and have laboured since industriously, but there was abroad in Germany a still more subtle, insidious, and perverting influence in Nietzsche's work. It has fallen to no man more than this poet-philosopher to have the spirit of his teaching universally accepted, while his own textual philosophy was practically unknown by the public. His was the full-blooded philosophy, the worship of Force. He rejected the doctrine of the greatest good to the greatest number; he repu-

[1] Mr. Sidney Low in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1914.
[2] Dr. J. W. Headlam in the *Historical Review* for October, 1897.

diated the Christian idea of justice, as "slave-morality." He elevated into a creed the doctrine that "Exploitation belongs to the nature of the living being"; that injury, violation and destruction were necessary to the triumph of the Superman, who should be master in a day when "Men shall become finer beasts of prey, quicker, cleverer, and more human." All this, swiftly and in a stealthy flood, since the beginning of the Bismarckian era, saturated the soil of German life on the middle and higher levels, and eventually drained into the lowest levels, till hardness, force and mastery became the creed of all.

It is not unfair to take from Nietzsche's works certain passages detached from their context for the purpose of showing what a revolting doctrine he preached, because the whole spirit of these passages pervades everything that he wrote. It was his ambition to eject from German thought the idealism of Kant and Fichte. These represented the power of the spirit which should inspire men to justice, to the betterment of their own race, and the betterment of the world. These declared for law and the gospel of right in the making of law, under which, being made, all men should have in the organized life of the community and in unorganized thought and opinion an equality of justice. Upon this ethical conception the old idealists of Germany founded their philosophy; and by it, in spite of all the ruthlessness of the period and of their race, Prussians at the beginning of the nineteenth century were deeply affected and influenced.

After 1870, however, the ideas of the new moral revolutionist began to allure the German mind with their glowing ideal of force aggressive and triumphant, of sordid luxury; the doctrine of Hercules and

Sardanapalus. Vague, contradictory, elusive, more poetical than logical, full of brilliance and light and glamour, but with much "interruption of the circuit" of reasoning, Nietzsche was caviare to the general; yet certain elementary things in his teaching stood out in simple and attractive clearness, and his popularity, delayed till after his reason had left him, but not till after his death, became very great. It was more easily attained because the basis of his philosophy was obedience to instinct. With the growing materialism of Germany, the exhortation to follow boldly, with the spirit of the master who would make slaves for his service and rejoicing, the primary ardours of human nature, facilitated the acceptance of this rubicund and exciting policy of life, thought and conduct. It was, in brief, the Will to Power, which in common language means, Follow your instincts in seeking what you want, and be strong enough to get it. That, if followed, meant the rejection of the German culture which was the product of the German philosophy of the early part of the nineteenth century, and also the rejection of Christian morals and the spirit of the Beatitudes. Not even to-day, a generation after his death, is Nietzsche's philosophy as a system understood, if, indeed, there was any real system at all; but even as the Elegy stands for all the poet Gray wrote, so certain definite pronouncements of Nietzsche stand for what he thought and wrote. He hated and despised German life and culture, but that of him which his fellow-countrymen never understood was incorporated into their national policy and ambitions, and was used to advance the nationalism which he repudiated. Nietzsche was a complete cosmopolitan; but the weapons that his philosophy gave to his country were used to harden, narrow, intensify, and

brutalize the spirit of his country. It is a curious anomaly that the man who has most influenced the German mind by his pernicious doctrine of Will to Power, rejects completely the pompous and offensive claim of all modern Germany, that in German *Kultur* is to be found the salvation of the world.

With this effrontery Nietzsche has no sympathy. He does not moderate his language in condemnation of German culture:

"The greatest error at present is the belief that this fortunate war has been won by German culture. An iron military discipline, natural courage and endurance, the superiority of the leaders, the unity and obedience of their followers — in short, factors which have nothing to do with culture helped to obtain the victory.

At present both the public and private life of Germany shows every sign of the utmost want of culture; the modern German lives in a chaotic muddle of all styles, and is still, as ever, lacking in original productive culture. If, in spite of this well-known fact, the utmost satisfaction prevails among the educated classes, it is due to the influence of the Culture-Philistines."

So much for Culture. Apart from this, there was to be no sweetness and light in the new Nietzschian world of the Superman; there was to be no justice or morality, save that morality which each man would make for himself, or which would be imposed by the Master Man on those whom he controlled.

Let us see what Nietzsche, the spirit of whose doctrine is the watchword of the German militarists; whose *Zarathustra,* we have been told by Hauptmann, is in the knapsack of every German soldier with *Faust* and the Bible, says of Christianity. The extracts are given *seriatim* to provide at least some coherent understanding of Nietzsche's attitude of mind:

"Christianity, however, represents the movement that runs counter to every morality, of breeding of race; it is anti-Aryan, the triumph of Caudela values, and the methods hitherto employed for making mankind moral have been fundamentally immoral."

"Christianity has waged a deadly war against the highest type of man."

"That the strong races of Northern Europe have not thrust from themselves the Christian God, is in truth no honour to their religious talent, not to speak of their taste. They ought to have got the upper hand of such a sickly and decrepit product of decadence as this 'spirit,' this cobweb-spinner, this hybrid image of ruin, derived from nullity, concept and contradiction, this pitiable God of Christian 'monotono-theism.'

"His great invention, his expedient for priestly tyranny, for ruling the masses, was personal immortality. This great falsehood destroys all reason, all natural instinct. Christianity owes its triumph to this pitiable flattery of personal vanity. In plain words, 'Salvation of the soul' means 'the world revolves around me.' The poison of the doctrine of 'equal rights for all' has been spread abroad by Christianity more than by anything else.

"With this I conclude, and pronounce my sentence: *I condemn Christianity*. To me it is the greatest of all imaginable corruptions. The Church is the great parasite; with its anæmic idea of holiness, it drains life of all its strength, its love, and its hope. The other world is the motive for the denial of every reality. I call Christianity the one great curse, the one great intrinsic depravity, the one great instinct of revenge, for which no expedient is sufficiently poisonous, secret, underhand, to gain its ends. I call it the one immortal shame and blemish upon the human race."

It is not, therefore, surprising to find such a philosopher announcing that every human being should devise his own virtue, should draw upon his own "categorical imperative." No more culture of the old beneficent kind; no more Christianity for a struggling world, says the philosophical reformer who

has had such an overwhelming influence upon modern Germany; but in its place the worship of Force, and the creed that all men should exploit other human beings, the stronger destroying the weak. The teaching was not without effect, though the Kaiser could only subscribe to a moiety of its tenets; though, according to Mr. Sidney Whitman, the one-time Chancellor, Prince Hohenlohe, said that the Kaiser was the "coolest rationalist" (meaning an agnostic) he had ever met in his life. Apostle of the new *Kultur* of savage war as he is — so much of Nietzsche is Hohenzollern — he keeps to "the faith of his fathers," interpreting it in his own way, but using the influence of the Will-to-Power philosopher to harden and invigorate a people who were in danger of losing that in which they had ever been most proficient, the quality of the warrior.

Nietzsche believed that war was not only necessary but beneficial — or as others of his creed have called it, "A biological necessity." He declares that, "We must learn to be hard and forget the old valuation of altruism," and his Kaiser sedulously encouraged hardness and the stony mind. He had really no need to do so. Beneath Prussian civilization is the raw appetite for blood and brutality, for a Scythian cruelty which takes no heed of war's chivalry and humanity. It is not enough that the foe shall be overcome. He must learn what vengeance is, and what Hate can do; and this war has not failed to show how Hate can be both pitiless and insane — and ridiculous.

M. A. Müggе, in his work on Nietzsche, says that the philosopher's clue to the meaning of the universe was war; and he quotes thus from *Zarathustra*, the *vade mecum* of the Uhlan and his tribe:

"Divinely will we strive against each other. Rather would I perish than renounce this one thing; that I myself must be war and Becoming. What is good? To be brave is good! It is not the cause that halloweth war, it is the good war that halloweth every cause."

Add to this view, approved by Treitschke, Hauptmann, and their comrades in the new ethics, Nietzsche's doctrine that there are two standards of morals, one for the masters, the strong, and the other for the slaves, the weak, and some real comprehension may be had of the spirit animating the militarism of Germany to-day. That militarism has eagerly poured Nietzsche's intoxicants into every throat which did not still adhere to the moral teetotalism of Kant.

If the following paragraphs, the ideas of which are repeated again and again throughout Nietzsche's work, are read together, there is no chance for misunderstanding the spirit now working in Germany at war. It is faithfully reflected in the *German War Book,* lately translated with pertinent and forceful comment by Professor J. H. Morgan, and commented on in another portion of this volume:

"Out of you a chosen people shall arise, and out of it the Superman."

"The refrain of my practical philosophy is, 'Who is to be the Master of the World'?"

"What a deliverance is the coming of an absolute master, a Napoleon, the history of whose influence is almost the history of the superior happiness of the nineteenth century!"

"The coming century foreshadows the struggle for the sovereignty of the world."

"The time for petty politics is past; next century will bring the struggle for world-dominion — the compulsion to great politics." [3]

[3] Written in the decade in which the Kaiser came to the throne.

"There are many signs that *Europe now wishes to become one nation.* All the profound and large-minded men of this century — *e.g.,* Napoleon, Goethe, Beethoven, Stendhal, Heinrich Heine, Schopenhauer, and Wagner — have had this unique aim. A boldly daring, splendidly overbearing, high-flying, and aloft-updragging class of higher men, destined to teach their age what constitutes High Man!"

If Nietzsche were the only man who advocated this pernicious doctrine, now being translated into practice by a country which repudiates every known principle of international law, it might be taken with a shrug of the shoulder; but evidence is only too plentiful that his influence has been felt in all other departments of German life. Sudermann, Fulda, Halby, Hauptmann, Von Andrejanoff, Georg Conrad, Kretzer, and many others have sedulously triturated his philosophy through fiction and the drama, and speakers and writers in every direction have praised the lusty, the overbearing life. Those who desired sanction for the remorseless doctrine of war for conquest as preached by Treitschke, found it in Nietzsche, to whom the State is sacred, and the individual only a child of the State, from whom obedience is the first principle, whose existence must be absorbed in the policy of the State.

Thus Treitschke: "The renunciation of its own power is, for the State, in the most real sense a sin against the Holy Ghost," while elsewhere he says many times that it is political idealism which demands wars, while it is materialism that condemns them; and his criticism of the United States, Great Britain, and the people of all races who desire peace and honour may be found in the following words:

"It has always been the tired, unintelligent and enervated party that has played with the dream of perpetual peace."

Nothing that has been here quoted from Nietzsche and Treitschke is out of harmony with the strident, imperious, dominating temper, eloquent arrogance and gifted rhetoric of the Emperor William's utterances. It was not necessary to be learned to follow the main idea of Nietzsche's philosophy — to strive to be a Superman, to follow your instincts, to get what you want by force. And not alone the Emperor, his Junker militarists, historians and philosophers preached the open and brazen doctrine of conquest for the promotion of selfish interests. German journalism daily fed the flame. An editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* of November 19th, 1914, makes the following quotation from the recent writings of Maximilian Harden, the most notorious, if not the most prominent publicist in Germany, and one of the erstwhile critics of the Kaiser:

"Let us drop our miserable attempts to excuse Germany's action. Not against our will and as a nation taken by surprise did we hurl ourselves into this gigantic venture. We willed it, we had to will it. We do not stand before the judgment seat of Europe. We acknowledge no such jurisdiction. Our might shall create a new law in Europe. It is Germany that strikes. When she has conquered new dominions for her genius, then the priesthood of all gods will praise the God of War.

"Germany is not making this war to punish sinners, or to free oppressed peoples, and then to rest in the consciousness of disinterested magnanimity. She sets out from the immovable conviction that her achievements entitle her to demand more elbow room on the earth and wider outlets for her activity."

So much for Germany's purpose in making war. As to the results of the war this fearless iconoclast says:

"We will remain in the lowlands of Belgium, to which we will add a narrow strip of coast towards Calais. This will close the war, from which there is nothing more to gain, after having vindicated our honour."

Since the war began, since Germany was checked on her way to the reconquest of Paris, and it became necessary for her to cultivate the good opinion of neutral countries, solicitous and inspired advocates for the German cause, repudiating such candid patriots as Maximilian Harden, indignantly repel the accusation that Germany dreamed of, worked for, planned to secure world-control. It is interesting, if hardly convincing, to observe that the most indignant counsel for Germany in this manner is Herr Dernburg, the ex-Colonial Minister of Germany, who is now its expert Press agent in America. Repudiating Dr. Eliot's charge that Germany's doctrine was Might is Right, Herr Dernburg says:

"This is very unjust. Our history proves that we have never acted on this principle. We have never got, or attempted to get, a World-Empire, such as England has won, and all of which, with very few exceptions, was acquired by the might of war and conquest. German writers who have expounded this doctrine have only shown how the large World-Empires of England and France are welded together, what means have been adopted for that purpose, and against what sort of political doctrines we must beware."[4]

Pages might be filled with refutation of the misstatements which Herr Dernburg has so ingeniously crowded into these few lines. It shows some hardihood to say that Germany has never dreamed of world-conquest in face of Bernhardi's assertion, already quoted, that what Germany now wishes to attain must be fought for, and won, against a superior

[4] *New York Times*, October 5th, 1914.

force of hostile interests and Powers; against the statements made by Professor Delbrück, a much greater authority than Herr Dernburg, quoted in another chapter. In such statements Herr Dernburg is even flouting his former chief, Prince Bülow, who has told us candidly, in his book *Imperial Germany,* that the reason why Germany did not seize the apparently favourable opportunity of the Boer War to attack England was that her naval power was not yet sufficiently developed.

The real importance of Herr Dernburg's statement lies, however, in his repudiation of the doctrine that Might is Right. In repudiating it he repudiates all those men of repute who have been forming German opinions for the last quarter of a century and more. Force, strength, and "Will to Power" is for them the sacred sanction of policy. They deride Arbitration as an alternative to war, not only on the practical ground that arbitration treaties must be peculiarly detrimental to an aspiring people, which has not reached its political and national zenith, and is bent on expanding its power, but on the scientific ground that arbitration audaciously assumes that the weak nation is to have the same right to live as the powerful and vigorous nation. "The whole idea," insists the German prophet on world-war, whose prophecies have been fulfilled, "represents a presumptuous encroachment on the natural laws of development which can only lead to the most disastrous consequences for humanity generally." [5]

But even the leaders of this school of thought seem to feel that the brutal doctrine of Might must have some moral justification, and they produce a moral justification which to most people will ap-

[5] Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War,* p. 34.

pear to plunge it into deeper immorality. The personal morality of the individual, says Treitschke for instance, rests on the question whether he has recognised and developed his own nature to the highest attainable degree of perfection. If the same standard is applied to the State, then "its highest moral duty is to increase its power." The individual must sacrifice himself to the State; and as there can be nothing higher than the State, the Christian duty of self-sacrifice does not exist for the State. In continuation of this thesis we are told that a sacrifice made to an alien nation not only is immoral, but contradicts the idea of self-preservation, which is the highest ideal of the State.[6]

According to the teachers of modern Germany, therefore, the moral justification of the doctrine that Might is Right rests on the question whether the State has increased its power to the highest voltage. It must be left to official apologists, such as Herr Dernburg, to square the Germanic view with the morality of less "cultured" nations. In the attempts to do so, and to clear their nation of holding to the pernicious doctrine, they will have to explain away the notorious speech of their own Chancellor to the Reichstag on August 4th, 1914, on the invasion of Belgium:

"Gentlemen, we are in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have invaded Luxemburg and perhaps are already on Belgian soil. That is contrary to the dictates of international law. It is true that the French Government has declared that France is willing to respect the neutrality of Belgium as long as her opponent respects it. France could wait, but we could not wait. *We were compelled to disregard the just protests of the Luxemburg and*

[6] Treitschke *Politik*, I. § 3, and II. § 28.

Belgian Governments. The wrong — I speak openly — that we are committing, we will endeavour to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached. Anybody who is threatened as we are threatened can only have one thought, how he is to hack his way through." [7]

If anything can add to the cynical brutality of the policy thus announced, it is the sentence in which the German Chancellor talks of compensation. To him the whole thing is purely material, to be atoned for by cash payment. Money, the cash nexus, is to make good devastated fields and ruined homes, violated women and mutilated children, the horrors of Aerschot, Dinant, and the crimes of Termonde, Louvain, Senlis, Visé, and the rest. There is no promise of making good the contempt of treaties, the shattering of the faith of nations. Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg cares nothing for that. Feebleness is the political sin against the Holy Ghost, as Treitschke said; therefore, in being ruthless, Germany is serving the Lord. Weak nations constitute a presumptuous encroachment on natural laws of development; therefore in crushing them Germany is the instrument of science, sanctified by the necessity which knows no law. So in *Paradise Lost* Satan excused his violation of man's primal virtue:

[7] So, in words not infrequently quoted, did Nikias, the Athenian Admiral, bid Melos abandon her neutrality during the Peloponnesian War. "We do not pretend," he said, "that we have any right of empire over you, nor that you have done us any wrong. You, in turn, need not try to influence us by saying that you have not joined with our enemy Sparta in this war; for you know as well as we do that right is only for those who are equals in power; the strong do what they can, and the weak suffer what they must."

Later in the interview Nikias uses words singularly like those of the Chancellor. "Besides extending our Empire, we shall gain in security by your subjection. The fact that you are weaker than others renders it all the more important that you should not succeed in baffling the masters of the sea."

"'And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and Empire with revenge enlarged,
By conquering this new world, compel me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.'
So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
The Tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds."

The erudite and powerful writer in the *Quarterly Review* of January, 1871, already quoted, in his striking article speaks as though he were living and reasoning on the events of to-day. The article is in every word harmonious to this moment. That is so because the criticism of German character and policy which he made then is accurately applicable to German character and policy to-day. Reviewing the Franco-German War and looking into the future of Europe, he says:

"For the essential weakness of the 'executive principle' in the law of nations is now aggravated by the predominance of Germany, under the leadership of Prussia. According to the political principles which have governed that State since the time of Frederick II, treaties seem to be only memoranda of the terms of armistice, which need be no longer observed when one of the contracting parties deems it advantageous to disregard them. . . . It may be argued but too truly that the prospect of obtaining the general assent of nations to a limitation of the right of superior force is not encouraging, seeing that the conduct of the late war by the victorious party can only be justified by the assumption that power of execution is the main element of right. For, if might is right, it follows that any limitation of the exercise of superior force is a limitation of right, and those who make *that* their law of international relations should consistently scorn any discussion of all limitations as much as they scorn interference between themselves and their fallen foe."

If you visit the Museum of Boulak, at Cairo, you will see there Seti in the mummied flesh, in appear-

ance almost as when he wore the Uraeus Crown and sat on the throne of Upper and Lower Egypt three thousand years ago; and coming out from that house of the dead Past into the light and life of to-day you will find that the past is not, in one sense, dead at all. In the bazaars of Cairo, among the fellaheen tilling their little farms, working the sakkiahs along the great river, you will still see Seti in form, face and figure, with all the thousand-year-old physical characteristics. Wave after wave of conquest has rolled over the Egyptian, apparently engulfing and obliterating him; but always he has emerged, always he has thrown back again in face, features, physique to the ancient type, and is still, in the day of Sultan Kamel, cast in the mould of Amenhotep.

So, too, with the German. Soil, climate, some stout and hidden germ of vigour, have given to him, as to a few other races like the Jews, a persistency of type which has survived the vicissitudes of twenty centuries. Physically and — for the world more important — morally, the German of to-day is the same as the German who strove and conquered in the Teutoberger forest in the dawn of our era. He is still in most essentials a primitive man. It cannot be doubted that Nietzsche had this in mind when he described the ruling influence of the inbred overlords in Germany to-day:

"These men are, in reference to what is outside their circle (where the foreign element, a foreign country, begins), not much better than beasts of prey. . . . They feel that in the wilderness they can revert to the beast of prey conscience; like jubilant monsters who perhaps come with bravado from a ghastly bout to murder, arson, rape and torture. . . . It is impossible not to recognize at the core of all these races the magnificent blonde brute avidly rampant for spoil and victory."

To these splendid animals, propagated and cultivated with studious care, guided by rules above the mawkish "good and evil morality" which for centuries has degraded and depraved mankind, shall fall the governance of the world. It has been said by the German apologists of the Herr Dernburg type, that neither Treitschke, Nietzsche, nor Bernhardi represents the mind of the German people; but their fellow-workers in the field of German ambitions and German *Kultur* are too many to permit of that defence. The policy for which they stand has its thousand votaries. "War is a biological necessity" goes echoing through every school-house, college-hall, factory, office, and Church in the German Empire. Mr. C. R. L. Fletcher, in one of the Oxford pamphlets, quotes the following blast of war philosophy from the *Pan-Germanische Blätter* for September, 1914. Its author is Herr K. F. Wolff, and its matter is not incongruous with the author's name:

"There are two kinds of races, master races and inferior races. Political rights belong to the master race alone, and can only be won by war. This is a scientific law, a law of biology. . . . It is *unjust* that a rapidly increasing master race should be struggling for room behind its own frontier, while a declining inferior race can stretch its limbs at ease on the other side of that frontier."

As has been noted, there have been vicissitudes in the history of Germany which threatened this primitive type with extinction. But they differ from those cataclysms which caused extinction of type in other nationalities; speaking paradoxically, they have been cataclysms of peace, not of war. It is curious and significant how the political position of Germany has coloured the whole thought and literature of her people. The literature, music, and philosophy which

have made her admired are in the main fruits of what the disciples of Treitschke call the period of her deepest degradation. The literature and philosophy of her later splendour are different in tone; most notably in this, that the material usurps the place of the ideal.

In studying German contemporary history it would seem as though the character of German thought varied in direct ratio with the rise or fall of Prussian influence. When the Separatism born of political inefficiency prevailed, the softer idealism of Southern Germany found a freedom which became impossible with a Germany unified under Prussia, the representative of the primitive German type. Under the iron rule of the Prussian superman intellectual idealism exists with difficulty; in Prussia's new philosophy thought and expression have a positive and palpably material and sordid aim. There is no place for the beneficent abstractions of Kant; philosophy must needs concern itself with historic theories, transmuted presently into political ethics. Thus, we have German savants, like Hauptmann, Ehrlich, Sudermann, Haeckel, Bode, Liszt, Röntgen and Harnack, issuing a proclamation defending the violation of Belgium and the destruction of Louvain, and informing the world that, "Without German militarism German culture would long ago have been obliterated." Even theology is pressed into the service, to sketch a new creed which it shall be Germany's high mission to impose upon the world.

It is in German eyes one of the proofs of Britain's unworthiness for Empire that she has failed to provide India with a satisfying religion. Christianity being rejected, it was Britain's duty to have formulated a new creed. Germany will fall into no such error; she has been preparing to make the great ex-

periment; Nietzsche, Lotze, and Hartmann have been developing German thought to that end. "The gloomy spell of Judea and Galilee" is to be broken; Nietzsche, as we have seen, clears away the "accumulated rubbish" of the centuries. There is to be new metaphysics, a new ethic, even a new God, an eclectic compound of the deities of a dozen creeds. The new Gospel is to be written; there are to be the new Beatitudes of Nietzsche, as follows:

"Ye have heard how in old times it was said, 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth,' but I say unto you, Blessed are the valiant, for they shall make the earth their throne. And ye have heard men say, Blessed are the poor in spirit, but I say to you, Blessed are the great in soul and free in spirit, for they shall enter Valhalla. And ye have heard men say, Blessed are the peacemakers, but I say unto you, Blessed are the war-makers, for they shall be called, if not the children of Jahve, the children of Odin, who is greater than Jahve."

Why not the children of Moloch? There are many apostles of his creed among the historic and highly-reputed soldiers of Germany. Defending Napoleon's notorious — and infamous — orders for the slaughter of the Turks captured at Jaffa, the late Count Yorck von Wartenburg, Colonel of the Prussian General Staff, found that though in the eyes of the mere didactic historical writers this deed may appear horrible and revolting, "Practical military history need not consider it as such. . . . If such an act is necessary for the safety of one's army, it is not only justified, *but its repetition in any future war will be advisable.*" [8]

In his book, *The Nation in Arms,* Field-Marshal von der Goltz, lately Military Governor of unhappy

[8] The italics are the author's.

and glorious Belgium, assents to the same thought and counsel:

"Inexorability and seemingly hideous callousness are among the attributes necessary to him who would achieve great things in war. In the case of the general there is only one crime for which history never pardons him, and that is defeat."

Major-General Disfurth brings his country's doctrine up to date in an article in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* of November, 1914, justifying German methods in the present war. Here are some of his truculent words:

"Frankly, we are and must be barbarians, if by this we understand those who wage war relentlessly and to the uttermost degree. . . . Every act of whatever nature committed by our troops for the purpose of discouraging, defeating and destroying our enemies is a brave act and a good deed, and is fully justified. . . . War is war, and must be waged with severity. The commonest, ugliest stone placed to mark the burial place of a German Grenadier is a more glorious and venerable monument than all the cathedrals in Europe put together. . . . They call us barbarians. What of it? . . . For my part I hope that in this war we have merited the title of barbarians. . . . Our troops must achieve victory. What else matters?"

Pre-eminent in the exposition of the dark creed is the German War Lord himself. The others are but acolytes. He disdains even the poor plea of necessity, he orders wholesale sacrifice on the altar even before the service begins. The words in which he sent his troops to China, in 1900, have been quoted in an earlier chapter, and need not be repeated here.

The new religion, then, is founded on Force. To the German, as to Mohammed, "War is not only heroism, it is the Divine act." To the Prussian

mind the Pacifists are not only futile faddists, they are enemies of human progress. When, at the last Hague Conference, the Kaiser was spoken of as a Pacifist, his representatives there and the German Press promptly and strenuously repudiated the suggestion. It was a war conference in the eyes of Germany, and no such accusation should pass unchallenged.

To-day the sanctity of war is not only asserted by the soldier in the camp, it is taught by every professor in the class-rooms of Germany.

In the view of Herr Kuno Fischer —

"Wars are terrible but necessary, for they save the State from social petrifaction and stagnation. It is well that the transitoriness of the world's goods is not only preached, but is learned by existence. War alone teaches this lesson." [9]

To Treitschke, war is the influence which evokes all that is noblest in humanity. He cries out against the perversion of morality which wishes to abolish the heroism of war among men, and says oracularly and callously:

"God will see to it that war always recurs as a drastic medicine for the human race." [10]

And so the later exponent of his gospel, translating it into terms of politics, assures us in all the emphasis of italics that, "*The maintenance of peace never can or may be the goal of a policy.*"

Briefly stated, the German idea is this: Strength is virtue, and weakness is vice; whence it naturally follows that the oppression of weakness by strength is an act of merit. The most powerful State is, therefore, the most moral; whence it follows that

[9] Kuno Fischer, *Hegel*, I, p. 737.
[10] Treitschke, *Politik*, I, p. 76.

the standards of Right and Wrong are to be set by the most powerful State. In plain words, those very rules which have been constructed for the protection of weakness are to become the selfish and immoral instruments of mere strength. Following this, with perfect logic, the new national morality lays it down that engagements and treaties are not to be observed if they are immoral, that is, if they limit the momentary interests of a new State; as thus:

"Yorck's decision to conclude the convention of Tauroggen was indisputably a violation of right, but it was a moral act, for the Franco-Prussian alliance was made under compulsion, and was antagonistic to all the vital interests of the Prussian State; it was essentially untrue and immoral. Now it is always justifiable to terminate an immoral situation." [11]

Illuminated by this philosophy, the neutrality of Belgium was clearly immoral, because it was inconvenient to Germany strategy. The violation of Belgium was, therefore, a moral act, and, viewed from that angle, Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg's confession of wrong was the purest tongue-in-the-cheek hypocrisy. Indeed, a German professor of universal history [12] not only defends the invasion of Belgium on the ground of military necessity, but extols it as a heroic decision.

The remarkable and prophetic article in the *Quarterly Review* for 1871, already quoted, has something to say on the doctrine of Might is Right which is as searching as anything written at this moment, when all that the writer prophesied in 1871 has come true; when the campaign of aggression and conquest, following upon the German successes against Denmark, Austria, and France, has done its work:

[11] Bernhardi's *Germany and the Next War*, p. 49.
[12] Prof. Oncken. Suddeutsche Monatshefte, Sept. 14, 1914.

"So long as there are countries, great and strong, where political power is held by a sovereign who may wield all the national resources for the gratification of his ambition or his personal ideas — be they avowedly selfish or gilded over with the pretext of a noble aim — wars will not cease. Much less can there be any hope of lasting peace so long as there is in the very heart of Europe a nation whose jurists and statesmen, professors and political writers, join with one voice in proclaiming, as a fundamental principle of public law, that a right, however well assured, ceases to be a right so soon as its possessor is unable to enforce its observance; a nation which, having persuaded itself that it is the most advanced in civilization, is ready for any sacrifice to obtain the supremacy which it deems its due. What hope of peace is left when such views are cherished by a people at once the most numerous and the most homogeneous in Europe? When, by a course of preparation, skilfully contrived and carried out through a long series of years, this nation is ready, at the shortest notice, to rise up in a compact mass, with arms and equipments all complete, . . . what can the German Empire do henceforth? Such a nation is nothing less than an enormous standing army on furlough, waiting to give practical effect to its lofty claims, and to reap the greatest possible advantage from every opportunity. The people which combines such political principles and aspirations with such an organization is not likely to shrink from war, but to seek it: *nor, when successful, will it accept the arbitration of neutrals, save in the way in which the Germans accepted it at the London Conference of* 1864, *namely, on the express condition of not being bound by the award.*"

In the German view, Power, being the sole measure of merit and the supreme standard of Right, may assert itself as convenience and advantage dictate, and may — indeed, should — assert itself with disregard of suffering. The ideal statesman must, if necessary, defy the verdict of his contemporaries; he must have a clear conception of the nature and purpose of the State; he must pursue his course, neg-

lectful of the individual and of all interests save those of the State, which is composed of Olympians whose gospel is force. In plain language he must not care for public opinion, he must settle what the State requires to fulfil its policy, whatever it may be, and then see that it gets what it wants. Being quite clear and determined as to this, and systematizing policy and organizing means on this basis, when the hour for combat strikes he can rise with a free spirit and a serene mind to the inflexible mood of Luther, here interpreted:

"Briefly in the business of war, men must not regard the massacres, the burnings, the battles and the marches, etc.—that is what the petty and simple do who only look with the eyes of children at the surgeon, how he cuts off the hand or saws off the leg, but do not see that he does it in order to save the whole body. Thus we must look at the business of war or the sword with the eyes of men, asking, Why these murders and horrors? It will be shown that it is a business divine in itself, and as needful and necessary to the world as eating or drinking or any other work." [18]

Therefore the ideal statesman in his actions honours with unenviable imitation the essential characteristics of Nietzsche's ideal ruler, the Cæsar that knows no law save Necessity and Ambition.

There are doubtless many Germans — it would be unpardonable to libel a whole nation — who do not subscribe in private to this theory of national politics; indeed, it is certain that if stated in set terms it would be abhorrent to a large section of German thought, and there are some German writers daring enough to deprecate it. Their opinions, however, do not count. Their dissent is, in fact, regarded as a phase of the innate and ruinous Separatist spirit

[18] Bernhardi's *Germany and the Next War*, p. 54.

of the German race, which it is the mission of Prussianism to suppress, even by the sword, as the Kaiser has said. The doctrines of the extremists in philosophy and the theories of the militarists have never, however, been badly put to the German people. As was shown earlier in this chapter the spirit of the doctrines and the theories were crystallized into catchwords and formulæ, and gave a definite temper of conquest, of national self-consciousness which became a thirst for more recognition, more power.

Not the least of the causes which has hastened on this war is the divorce between the German people and the German State. To Nietzsche, to Treitschke, to Bernhardi, to Reventlow, to Von der Goltz, above all to the Kaiser, the State is a separate organized entity, as one might say a human absolutism, a ruling class of armed oracles, placed outside and above the people. Treitschke, in one of his lectures delivered at Berlin University,[14] says of the State:

"It is not the totality of the people, as Hegel assumed in his deification of the State — the people is not altogether amalgamated with it. . . . On principle it does not ask how the people is disposed; it demands obedience; its laws must be kept whether willingly or unwillingly."

Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, accustomed to regard themselves as the State and the State as composed of themselves, must find it difficult to realize the conception of a dual organism such as that of Germany — a people trading, toiling, living under and dying for a mysterious thing, composite of men but acting like a machine; whose word is the only law, which, looking upon itself as a divine instrument, is "indifferent to the point of view of the present

[14] *Politik*, Book I, Section I.

day," and sits " on the hills like gods together careless of mankind."

Yet that conception must be grasped, if we would understand the true meaning of the theory that the morality of the State need not coincide with the morality of the individuals who compose it. Once grasped, however, the understanding of the new doctrine is not difficult. It is, after all, the old primitive doctrine that Might is Right, draped in the tawdry garments of an idealized materialism. Baldly stated, it is this: First determine what you want to get, make sure that you are strong enough to get it, and then persuade yourself that you have a mission. Create spacious and glittering ideals to cover your lust for power; invent the doctrine that power is morality; and then set forth, under banner of ruthless war, to plant your ideals, irrespective of human law or human sufferings, in proportion to your strength and in accord with your opportunity. Justice and justification must then infallibly be on your side; for by the canons of the creed you have devised, the sole tests of right and wrong are Advantage, Power and Opportunity.

CHAPTER IV

THE PLACE IN THE SUN

WHEN the Kaiser was crowned the circumstances of the time were propitious to the development of his well-known aspirations for the advancement of Germany. The prodigious strides which his country had made in commerce and industry in the twenty years following on the founding of the Empire lured ardent ambition, intoxicated with unaccustomed wealth, to greater exploits; the easy triumphs of 1864, 1866 and 1870 had created, not only in Germany but in Europe, a belief in the invincible character of German arms. Yet there was already, in 1890, at Berlin a hovering consciousness that German unity was not yet fully accomplished, that for its attainment another great foreign adventure was necessary. There was something more than a suspicion among the political cognoscenti, there was an actual fear that prosperity had not been an unmixed blessing; that it had brought in its train some softening of character which must be cured. Wealth was exalting the middle classes; they were beginning to press upon the "high-born." In other States this gradual fusion of class distinction might have been welcomed as a step towards national unity; to Prussian Junkerdom it appeared a dangerous subversion of its social theories and a menace to military greatness and power.

To such a ruler and amid such surroundings the patience and prudence of Bismarck were hardly tolerable. There was already a school of thought which

repudiated the advice of the old Empire-builder against unprovoked war and extra-European expansion; and the Emperor was one of its disciples. Within three years after ascending the throne he dropped the pilot and entered on the path, the end of which is now almost in view.

If the Emperor was moved to dismiss Prince Bismarck by ambition, the act of dismissal hurried him along the fatal path with increased momentum. Prince Bülow has lifted the veil of the Nineties with remarkable frankness:

"In view of the anxious and discouraged state of feeling that obtained in Germany during the ten years following Prince Bismarck's retirement, it was only possible to rouse public opinion by harping on the string of nationalism, and waking the people to consciousness. A great oppression which weighed upon the spirit of the nation had been occasioned by the rupture between the wearer of the Imperial Crown and the mighty man who had brought it up from the depths of Kyffhauser. This oppression could be lifted if the German Emperor could set before his people, who at that time were not united either by common hopes or demands, a new goal towards which to strive; could indicate to them 'a place in the sun' to which they had a right, and to which they must try to attain. On the other hand, patriotic feeling must not be roused to such an extent as to damage irreparably our relations with England, against whom our sea-power would for years be insufficient, and at whose mercy we lay in 1897, as a competent judge remarked at the time, like so much butter before the knife." [1]

Was ever so naïve a political confession made to the world before? With a candour only equalled by his boldness the ex-Chancellor of Germany exposes the hidden springs of Prussian policy on the very eve of the explosion which that policy was sure

[1] *Imperial Germany*, p. 23.

to cause. It defies analysis, because it is itself a masterly analysis of the German position — a disunited nation anxious and discouraged by the overthrow of the old policy; a monarch compelled to allay discontent and promote harmony by pointing his people to distant places in the sun; to be gained by the creation of a sentiment, the full extent and purpose of which must for a while be studiously concealed.

The new policy aimed at nothing less than a political and ethical reconstruction of the world, an object which now seems in the fair way of accomplishment, if not precisely in consonance with the aims of its authors. There were three stages in the new policy, each connoting war — the Prussianization of Germany under the political ideas of the Hohenzollerns; the Prussianization of Europe under the hegemony of Prussianized Germany; the Prussianization of the world under the canons of Treitschke, Nietzsche, and Junkerdom. The great idea is thus set forth:

"We have fought in our last great wars for our national union and our position among the Powers of Europe; we must now decide whether we wish to develop into and maintain a World-Empire, and procure for German spirit and German ideas that fit recognition which has been hitherto withheld from them." [2]

But Germany was not to be purely selfish in these vast ambitions. Their realization was a duty not only to herself, but to the whole world. Were she to fail, the future of German nationality would be sacrificed: an independent German civilization would not exist; and the blessings for which German blood has flowed in streams — spiritual and moral liberty,

[2] Bernhardi's *Germany and the Next War*, p. 104.

and the profound and healing aspirations of German thought — would for long ages be lost to mankind!

That was the view of the Mahdis of Germany and their political and military dervishes. It was, of course, hoped that each of these stages could be reached separately. The Prussianization of Germany, the creation of national unity, being impossible as a result of internal political capacity, could be achieved only by war. The first ideal war for that purpose would be another conquest of France, as being at once the easiest and the most certain way of threatening, weakening, and, in time, overcoming the hostile power of Great Britain, and of consolidating Germany's political position.

"In one way or another *we must square our account with France* [the italics are his] if we wish for a free hand in our international policy. This is the first and foremost condition of a sound German policy, and . . . the matter must be settled by force of arms. France must be so completely crushed that she can never again come across our path." [3]

Though this was only the saying of one man, it was repeated in a thousand forms in the works of authors, professors, statesmen and teachers; in the Press, the pulpit, and the beer-garden. This was the preachment: "France out of the way, then England. England is our foe. She has more of the earth's surface than we have, more of the world's trade than she, or any nation except Germany, ought to have. She even robbed us of one-half of New Guinea, though we tried for the whole; and we should have had it, but that her insolent cub Australia intervened. We must have what we never have had, and what England has had for hundreds of years — an Empire. She will not give it to us,

[3] Bernhardi's *Germany and the Next War*, p. 105.

so we must take it. We must await 'The Day'; and with it will come our war of conquest, renewing the glories of the times when we made Silesia, Poland, Hanover, Schleswig-Holstein, and Alsace-Lorraine our own. Ours is the cry of the old Crusaders, *Dahin!*"

Such a victorious war, it might be assumed, would complete the unification of Germany, and secure that solid German confederation from the North Sea to the Adriatic, which bounded Prince Bismarck's aspirations. The next step would follow naturally. Germany's allies would be strengthened, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Turkey would be supported and encouraged; while in a game of double-dealing, Bulgaria would, at the same time, be incited and encouraged to attack Turkey, weakening her while yet Germany held her hand and crushed her and robbed her; and the conviction would be instilled into Germany's weaker neighbours that their independence and interests were bound up with Germany, and could only be secured under the protection of German arms. From this conviction might eventually come an enlargement of the Triple Alliance into a Central European Federation, controlled at first by Germany and then ruled by her and "God, and our German sword," as the Kaiser has so modestly declared. Switzerland, where German gold and German influence has been doing service to this end for many a day; Belgium, which has been ruled commercially from Berlin; Holland, Bulgaria and Roumania, where German Princes rule and German influences have been supreme; Servia, in spite of herself; Denmark, and ultimately Greece, should become obedient vassals to the Hohenzollern.

With France crushed, with Holland and Belgium absorbed, with a Prussianized State extending from

the Baltic to the Mediterranean and from the English Channel to the Sea of Marmora, Germany would be prepared for the last great adventure. The Slavs would be pushed back on the East and the old Germanic provinces recovered. Great Britain would disappear, as, indeed, would be a fitting end for the bastard offspring of chance and duplicity, a thing which was wholly a "monstrous sham," for which there could be no room in a world governed by valour and "swank"; by the Will to Power. England would have to disgorge those possessions obtained by blundering chance or by infamous theft.

For years Germans have called England the robber-State, have charged her with building up her Empire by disregarding the rights of other nations, with seizing the unoccupied lands of the earth through and by the policy of "navalism." They appear to have forgotten the loathsome policy of Frederick the Great, who suggested the infamous crime of the first partition of Poland — a cancer in the side of Europe ever since; how in the twenty-three years' war, beginning in 1792, Prussia sold herself out of it for increased territory east of the Lower Rhine; how, when the nations of Europe begged her to join them to destroy the power of Napoleon, who aimed at world-empire, and nearly achieved it, she agreed to join them, but again sold her neutrality to the Corsican for the kingdom of Hanover; how she got Schleswig-Holstein by an indefensible invasion based on a bamboozling pretext of disputed succession to the Duchy put forward by the German Confederation; how she tricked France into a war by manipulating a telegram, by which she acquired Alsace-Lorraine. The very kingdom of Prussia itself was got by the underhand acts of two electors of Brandenburg, in 1525 and 1618.

Even more important in one sense than all these was the attack made upon Austria in 1866 without a declaration of war in a period of European peace, when Austria declined to agree to the repudiation of the Duke of Augustenburg as the rightful heir to the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, after going to war to support his fictitious claims, and to divide the Duchies between them. Austria demanded the decision of the Confederation of the German States, which pronounced Prussia as having grossly transgressed against the Public Law of Germany. This was what Bismarck had planned, and it worked. Out of Sadowa came the complete annexation of Schleswig-Holstein, the mediatization of Hanover, the annexation of Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfurt, with the power of Austria made impotent. Out of it came also the open road to Paris, and the new German Empire and its Hohenzollern Emperor. A Hohenzollern had been offered the Imperial Crown of a new German Empire after the Revolution of 1848, but had declined it, because Prussia did not want union only: her object was control of all the German States, and to accomplish that, successful wars, adding to Prussian prestige, were necessary. The prestige came in the triumphant wars with Denmark, Austria, and France. Then the Prussian became dominant by the glory of his arms, and assumed the Imperial Crown. Bavaria, Würtemberg, Saxony, accepted their inferior position, for during three generations they had slowly been divested of their ancient confidence and their sure pride. Saxony's subservience began in that dark day when Frederick the Great did with neutral Saxony what William II has done with Belgium. He was preparing to fight other enemies, and Saxony lay in his path. He struck her down without offence

on her part, and afterwards cold-bloodedly said that he did it because she was not ready for war, and it was to his advantage to bring her low.

Even the United States of America was not to escape the German readjustment of the territorial balances of the world. The isolated groups of Germans abroad,—

"Greatly benefit German trade, since by preference they obtain their goods from Germany; but they may also be useful to Germany politically, as has been found in America, where the American-Germans have formed a political alliance with the Irish, and thus united, constitute a power in the State, with which the Government must reckon."[4]

After all this, it seems almost superfluous to be told that the Portuguese colonies would be acquired whenever some political or financial crash would give an opportunity, and that Bolivia and Brazil would one day be absorbed.

But what was to happen to the Empire thus garnered from its present possessors, the execrated Britons? They, since Heaven let them remain a part of the earth, were to be civilized. These "stolen," far-flung, and benighted lands were not merely to be exploited, as at present, for a base commercialism. The German conception was infinitely higher than that. They were to be Prussianized. From the point of view of civilization, it was imperative to preserve the German spirit, and by so doing to establish *foci* of universal *Kultur*. If the pan-Germanic purpose was to be attained, it would be necessary to Prussianize the whole world, both politically and ethically.

That, in substance, was the creed contained in Ger-

[4] Bernhardi's *Germany and the Next War*, p. 78.

man books, newspapers, pamphlets, and the scripts of lectures without number. The doctrine that other nations must be ransacked, robbed, and ruined because the German people lack creative political genius is, however, held to be wanting in authority. Even if German expansion were justified by the contention that supreme political genius is vested in Germany, and that therefore, in her *Weltpolitik* she is but the implement of the evolutionary doctrine of the survival of the fittest, German pretensions would still fail to commend themselves to the victims in possession. They might even be so decadent as to prefer and fight for their own inferior methods of government, as they have done; and they would certainly rebel openly against the unscientific theory that those most incapable of governing themselves should become the universal governors. These unregenerates would ask how, if German political capacity could not preserve, by so-called democratic but actually autocratic means, a European Empire from demoralization, it could hope to aspire to maintain a united World Empire inhabited by a real democracy. The clear, hard Teutonic logic could provide only one answer to that interrogation — the Teutonic World-Empire might only be maintained by the elimination of non-Teutonic ideals.

So long as there remained a single powerful State, or a number of States, unprepared to sacrifice their own position and power for the maintenance of German unity, and unready to abandon their old political moral ideas for the *Kultur* of the Teuton, so long would there be danger of German disruption. The old fatal story of the Popes and the Hohenstaufen might be repeated in that twentieth century which Germany has claimed for her own. Indeed, as the German professorial warrior, whose name is now so

notorious, tells us, the execution of these schemes would clash with many old-fashioned notions and vested rights. In the first place it would be necessary to disregard the principle of the balance of power in Europe, following in this the doctrine of Treitschke, that, "Such a system cannot be supported with an approximate equilibrium among the nations."

But the great Teutonic world-scheme involved more than this:

"We must put aside all such notions of equilibrium. . . . It is not now a question of a European State system, but of our embracing all the States of the world, in which the equilibrium is established on real factors of power. We must endeavour to obtain in this system our merited position at the head of a federation of European States." [5]

Treitschke asked for a Germany as one nation under a Hohenzollern; his buoyant disciple foresees a world purified by Potsdam and organized by the Balaams of Berlin. The last sentence of extract verifies the statement made on a preceding page, that the smaller States of Europe should become satellites of Germany. In William II, the apostles of the new Idea found the very man for their purpose, the autocrat and the fanatical worshipper of his House and its history. The ruler who had threatened the extermination by violence of political freedom of thought in his own countrymen would not shrink from inculcating principles by fire and sword on alien races. The Kaiser is indeed the Mohammed of the modern world, imbued with the spirit of the destroyers of the Alexandrian Library, whose belief was that all it contained, "Is either in the Koran or is unworthy of attention." Have we not already been consoled for the ruined architecture of

[5] Bernhardi's *Germany and the Next War*, p. 110.

Louvain and Rheims, and Lille, by the assurance that German *Kultur* can, with a Potsdam mason, rebuild finer temples than those it has destroyed?

So far as the comparison between the aims of Mohammed and the Kaiser is inexact, the moral advantage lies with the Arab, in that Germany has invented her creed to sanctify her aggression. Without some moral sanction the materialism of German ambitions would be too naked, her policy too shameless.

Colonial expansion has been for many years preached to the German people from two texts, the one commercial and the other imperial. They, and the world generally, are exhorted to observe the vast industrial development of Germany, and are told that her growing wealth and teeming population must have outlets, must be given space for expansion. The "open door" does not satisfy the German demand for markets and settling grounds. "We are," they say, "absolutely dependent on foreign nations for the import of raw materials, and to a considerable extent also for the sale of our own manufactures. . . . Then, again, we have not the assured markets which England possesses in her Colonies."

It must be admitted that Germany has been frank in regard to the necessity for colonial expansion, and equally frank as to the means by which that expansion might be secured. Treitschke and Bernhardi have been greatly quoted, but there is a man of greater eminence than Bernhardi, and of saner judgment than Treitschke, who has written with great authority upon this business. It is Professor Delbrück. As far back as 1898 Professor Delbrück, who succeeded Treitschke as editor of the *Preussicher Jahrbuch,* in an article in that publication, said:

"If, however, the world outside Europe were divided up between one or two nations, as, for instance, English and Russian, it would be impossible that those European races which had no share in this should be able permanently to maintain themselves against these gigantic Powers. That is the reason why Germany must necessarily pursue a Colonial policy on a great scale. Germany must attempt to make up that which it has unfortunately delayed to do during the last centuries. It must create large districts outside Europe in which German nationality, German speech and German intellectual life have the possibility of future development."

That Bismarck was not a friend of this ambitious programme of colonial expansion the Herr Professor admits:

"It is true that Prince Bismarck would not hear anything of this policy; he saw the future conflicts into which it would lead us. All the greater is the merit of the present Government. A great nation must have great aims before it. . . . But the Government would in no way have been the true inheritor of the Bismarck spirit which could not trust itself to go beyond that which he had said and done. By progress alone can power be maintained."

How was this colonial expansion to be achieved? Either by absorbing territory not yet annexed by other nations, or by taking from other nations what they already possessed. The former scheme was carried out in the absorption of territory in West Africa, in Southwest Africa and in East Africa; not very valuable, not very capable of giving large markets for German goods or for securing many purchases for German goods, but making a start. It was a slow business. As for the other branch of the policy, it could be accomplished in two ways: first by securing commercial domination in territories

belonging to other nations, which would ultimately lead to political domination; and this in turn would ultimately lead to sovereignty. There was South America. It was held by a series of weak governments; it gave every promise of proving a fertile field for German expansion. But that adventure proved a failure also. The Venezuela difficulty emerged bristling with the bayonets of the Monroe doctrine. The United States would have none of it. Germany had already entered, however, into spheres of British and American influence in New Guinea and in Samoa, and there she succeeded. In Samoa, from commercial she advanced to political domination, and finally to sovereignty. Being turned away from South America, and sure but slow development in Africa, the Kaiser's eyes became firmly fixed upon the British Empire, and it was resolved that in good time when the Naval Bill of 1900 had brought forth its fruits, that Great Britain should be relieved of a share of her White Man's Burden.

But as France, in 1900, had not been won to desert Russia, and the Triple Entente was an immovable feast of friendship for defence, she must be stripped of her colonial possessions and gathered into the German garner before the British harvest was reaped. Professor Delbrück's ambitions were in keeping with the spirit of his Imperial Master, and were fully sustained by those subsequent events which have culminated in this war, for he says:

"It is quite unnecessary to explain that this conception of the duties of our foreign policy *requires the highest development of our military and naval power which can possibly be attained.* The increase in our prosperity permits us to direct our gaze on the very greatest, and the future of the nation imperatively demands that there should be no parsimony, and that we should shrink from no sacrifices."

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It does not seem unwarrantable to ask what was the need of a vast naval and military force for colonial expansion if the colonial expansion was to be peaceful? Here is the true gospel according to Herr Delbrück:

"There is no higher task to put before the coming generation than to see that the world is not divided between English and Russians. . . . Without war if it is possible, but it is something which would not be bought too dear by the expense of ever so much blood."

This is a gospel of licence, loot, and land-lust, lacking in none of the elements which have been exhibited by Germany in the present terrific conflict forced upon the world by her. One of Berlin's renowned apostles speaks of the "return of the days of the Hanseatic League," and calls attention to the fact that Germany once possessed a great oversea trade and that she lost it. If she failed to found a Colonial Empire, if she was outstripped by Holland, Spain, and England, she has herself to blame. She had in her grasp an Empire which gave her harbours in every European sea, but it slipped from her fingers for lack of ability to retain it.

The naked policy, then, is this, that Germany should redress the wrong done her by Nature in denying her the highest political capacity, by ravaging other nations to deprive them of their possessions — first France, then England, and after that the still wider swathe. We must go back into history to find so naked, so rapacious and so cynical a doctrine. Colonies have often changed hands as the result of wars, but the cases are few where their possession was the cause or the justification of wars. The British navy itself had its real birth in the defensive measures against the Spanish Invasion; and that it

has created a World-Empire is almost an accidental result, due largely to England's natural position as an island; to the amazing enterprise and spirit of adventure in her people; to her limited field of raw materials; and to her industrial and economic policy which compelled her to seek both raw material and food overseas.

Despite the overtures made to France by Germany at the beginning of this century, it has always been intolerable to the German militarists and political philosophers that the Empire, stricken to the dust by Germany in 1870, should still be a Great Power, owing largely, in German eyes, to the possession of colonies in Africa and Indo-China. Yet what had Germany been doing over these hundreds of years? The present German Empire is new — garishly new, but Germany is old, and is not without a long list of sins of omission and commission, as the history of the Thirty Years' War, the Seven Years' War, the Twenty Years' War, and many another shows.

All that is not our affair, nor, indeed, need the proposition have been seriously discussed except to show how the Teutonic mind has been tuned to accompany the aggressive designs of the Kaiser and the group by which he is and has been surrounded. You must, said this camarilla to the German taxpayer, continue to increase your fleet so that you may find new openings for your trade and new German homes for your children overseas. You must found a Colonial Empire, not alone for these comparatively sordid reasons but for the honour of your race. See how decadent freebooting England dominates the Seven Seas; observe how the tricolour which you trampled underfoot less than half a century ago waves over fertile dominions. Even Holland possesses finer colonies than Germany. Side by side

with your navy you must maintain a vast army, for it is only by destroying the political equilibrium of Europe that you can hope to make of your navy a weapon to overturn the political equilibrium of the world. You are strong and brave; you excel in all that goes to the making of Empires except in your capacity to hold what you have won; therefore, make sacrifices now, that you may be able to destroy all the forces which might put your political incapacity to the test.

So the German Empire began to put this creed into practice on the 1st of August, 1914: having first employed myriad spies in every European country, and in England and France in particular, for years; having lured Turkey into tutelage; having used Bulgaria for her purposes against her seduced victim; having impelled only-too-willing Austria to oppress the Serbians and hound Serbia into acts of aggression and subterranean opposition; having openly invoked and besought the friendship of the United States and secretly sought to undermine the policy[6] on which her position on the Continent of America rests secure; having made of her own Empire an arsenal, and war-slaves of her children. Meanwhile their Kaiser played the part of the enchanted guest to the undoing of his credulous host in nearly every capital of Europe; and most of all in England. It was magnificent in its organization, ruinous in its purposes, and detestable in its debasement of a great people.

Baron Mumm, the German Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and Herr Dernburg, ex-Colonial Secretary, have said that England went into this war for commercial purposes. If comment on such a charge is necessary at all, it may be said that if Eng-

[6] The Monroe Doctrine.

land went into this war for business reasons it would be spending a tremendous lot of money for a limited return. Does any reasonable person believe that Great Britain would spend her hundreds of millions of pounds on the chance of conquering the trade and colonial possessions of Germany? It was not as though British commerce was in desperate case. Between 1903 and 1913 our imports had grown by 220 millions, our exports by 270 millions; our export of manufactured goods had risen by 151 millions. True, there were signs that the tide was on the turn, but the inevitable ebb would reach all countries alike; it was not to be stemmed by war. There was some jealousy, some envy, of Germany's commercial progress; but, when England was bidden to "wake up," it was not to the furbishing of swords but to greater activity in factory and markets. If Germany was a formidable rival, she was likewise a good customer; would it be common sense to destroy the certain customer in the uncertain hope of getting rid of a rival? The colonial possessions of Germany would be no rich booty; they would bring nothing worth while to Great Britain in our generation. Developing new territory is expensive; besides, the Party now in power in England has always been the foe of further colonial development and expansion of territory. Great Britain refused Hawaii fifty years ago; she refused Samoa in the Eighties. She has more than enough territory to control and consolidate, and the German colonial possessions would not and will not increase her trade appreciably. Is a reduction of value on securities of all kinds throughout the world, is a crippled and oppressive condition of exchange, are closed or restricted Stock markets, is the temporary but enormous loss of an immense discount business, profitable to Great Britain? Is there a sin-

gle man in financial England who does not regard the war as a commercial calamity from which British people alive to-day, in common with the rest of the world, will never wholly recover? If England had been other than peace-loving she might well have gone to war during the last fifteen years to secure her navy — the insurance of her trade and commerce — from peril of the German navy. That would have been a reasonable pretext for or cause of war; but Great Britain's mercantile marine was many times larger than that of Germany, and apart from all other reasons, there was no selfish need for this crime against the world and against Germany. England is not yet so foolish, even were the intention possible, as to enter upon a vast and bloody struggle to destroy the trade belonging to three million tons of German shipping which Germany could replace again after the war. It is not to be supposed that Germany will not be a commercial competitor when the present war is over, if she is beaten. Whatever may happen to her armaments her trade will revive and advance. Her people will work and thrive; and it is for the good of the world that they should thrive, if they will but divest themselves of ambitions for increase of power and territory by war and at the expense of other nations and settled and accepted conditions.

CHAPTER V

GERMAN COLONIAL POLICY, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE

GERMAN ambitions for colonial Empire, however, and her anger at any check to her purposes have been an open book to all who, from their positions official, semi-official, or political, have been brought *vis-à-vis* of German interests now adventuring here, now there, in the quest for oversea territory. In 1893 the present writer was told by Señor Mariscal, Minister of Foreign Affairs in Mexico, that German designs in South America would become a grave international matter, and that the United States would be forced to emphasize the reality of the Monroe Doctrine before many years passed. As events proved Señor Mariscal was right. In the year 1901, at Aiken, in South Carolina, the late W. C. Whitney, former Secretary of the Navy in the Cleveland Administration, said to the author of this book:

"You think that Germany has designs on the British position, that she wants and will strike for Great Britain's Colonies as soon as she has a navy? Do not fash yourselves, as the Scotch say. We will be taking Germany on before that time comes. Little as we shall like it, we will have to do your work for you. She isn't cured yet of her designs on South America. She will try it on and try it on, and she will try it on once too often. She wants to challenge the Monroe Doctrine, and she will do it if she thinks she can do it safely, if she thinks the United States will not fight. You saw what happened at Manila. There the British played up in style. Dewey had more than moral support from you there. Well, I tell you that when I was Secretary of the Navy under Cleveland, I saw that Germany meant to grab

Brazil and Bolivia and Venezuela, and any other portion of South America which was too weak to resist her — if we let her. I made up my mind that my country would not let her slice off one little chunk from the Monroe Doctrine. You did not notice any decline of the American Navy under my administration, did you? No. Well, Germany made me work harder than I ever did in my life. Don't worry. We will have to do your work for you."

Similar views have been held and stated by other Americans, and the present war has spread the conviction that the United States cannot contemplate with a sense of security the possible, if not probable, rise of a victorious and world-dominating Germany. Four years ago the late Admiral Mahan, writing of British naval supremacy and German pretensions of naval rivalry, spoke of the necessity,—

"For all peoples, who recognize the importance to themselves of equality or opportunity in the world markets, to consider with what attitude of mind, what comprehension of conditions, and what measure of force, they will approach the inevitable developments of the future. . . ."

". . . The nations of the world have to regard the two facts: (1) a general rivalry in the regions named (Europe, Africa, and Asia), complicated in South America by the Monroe Doctrine; and (2) a German navy soon to be superior to every other, except the British. Should the latter retain its full present predominance, this coupled with the situation of the British Islands, constitutes a check upon Germany; but that check removed, none approaching it remains. It follows that the condition and strength of Great Britain is a matter of national interest to every other community." [1]

In August, 1914, shortly before he died, the great naval strategist reaffirmed his conviction more specifically:

"If Germany succeeds in downing both France and Russia,

[1] A. T. Mahan, *The Interest of America in International Conditions*, p. 77. London, 1910.

she gains a respite by land, which may enable her to build up her sea-force until it is equal or superior to that of Great Britain. In that case the world will be confronted by the naval power of a State not, like Great Britain, sated with territory, but one eager and ambitious for expansion, and eager also for influence. This consideration may well affect American sympathies." [2]

Another American authority has expressed the same opinion, adding a tribute to Great Britain's naval power:

"If it shall develop," it says, "that the Germans drive the English from the seas, incredible as it may seem, then this country will have a veritable and formidable foe with which we may cope for the protection of our Monroe Doctrine only by vast expenditures for naval defence, or forfeit our right and power of enforcement of that instrument, to which, it is proper to remark, the Germans have never subscribed. With the German necessity of expansion there will be, without much formality, a descent upon Central American and South American domains as an outlet of the excess Teutonic population. With the loss of the English Fleet the power of that country to control the seas will deprive us of our principal ally in the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine, which has been honoured by Europeans largely, if not entirely, because of the English naval fighting strength." [3]

Are these views justified? Would German victory over the Allies threaten the peace or prosperity of the United States? It should be interesting, and perhaps it may be surprising, to some Americans to learn from the mouths of Germans, not so adroit and careful as Professor Münsterburg for instance, opinions which throw light on this far from academic subject.

"Weltmacht oder Niedergang! (World-power or

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[3] *The Army and Navy Register*, quoted in London *Daily Telegraph*, August 22nd, 1914.

Downfall!) will be our rallying cry," cries General Bernhardi stridently in his book *Germany and the Next War*. It is an old, old cry, of which we thought the world would hear no more; or, if it came, then from some Oriental Empire born again and moving ruthlessly upon the Occident. This dream of world-dominion has come to other States and Empires; sometimes for momentary good and sometimes for ill, but always with misery and destruction in its wake. Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Spain, and France — and now Germany. Each time it has come all the nations of the world have had to brace themselves for the shock. Some went under, and some survived; but none emerged unscathed. In modern times, nations determined to preserve their independence and freedom from one man's tyranny have united to break the power that threatened to enslave the earth. So it was that Charles V, Philip II, Louis XIV, and Napoleon, each in his bloody day, was checked on his course of conquest by a Europe determined to be free. The plans and hopes of Imperial Germany to-day affect the future of every nation everywhere. The world is in the melting-pot again, old foundations shake, new structures are in the making.

"Our world has passed away
In wantonness o'erthrown.
There is nothing left to-day
But steel and fire and stone!"

The sabre-slashing General Bernhardi learned the application of the World-Power-or-Downfall formula from his teacher, the historian Treitschke, and he, in his turn, is supported by the presnt Kaiser.

"When the German flag flies over and protects this vast Empire, to whom will belong the sceptre of the universe?"

the burning rhapsodist Treitschke asks at the top of his voice in one of his books, and he does not ask in vain. Millions have bravely tried to answer on the battle-fields of Belgium, France, Poland, and Silesia.

With such a spirit animating his loyal subjects, the Kaiser was speaking to the card in his proclamation a few years ago to the effect that, "Nothing must be settled in this world without the intervention of Germany and of the German Emperor." [4]

The general outlines of Germany's world policy are such as to warrant apprehension, by all other peoples, controlled by whatever conditions of neutrality and isolation in the present. To produce particular and specific expressions of German intentions which threaten the peace and prosperity of the United States seems almost unnecessary; even if none were to be found, they could be logically assumed. When an Empire proposes and plans to conquer the world, it cannot make exceptions; it must remove all obstructions as it marches on; and no nation in the world may hypnotize itself into an imaginary exemption. In this case, however, tangible testimony does exist of the intentions of Germany respecting the United States; intentions which are menacing. To appreciate them rightly, however — since to many they will seem as inexplicable as they are unjustified — German traditions and German principles must be considered.

Materialism has produced in the German what to men of other traditions seems an utterly cynical point of view. Bismarck had this cynical doctrine deeply rooted in him. "Every government," he said, "takes solely its own interest as the standard of its actions, however it may drape them with deductions

[4] Reich, *Germany's Madness*, p. 51, New York, 1914.

of justice or sentiment." [5] While we can admire the sardonic and defiant frankness of such utterances, we must at the same time keep them clearly in mind when attempting to interpret German dealings with other nations — nations like Belgium, for instance. A State which holds such views is naturally quick to suspect those whom she morbidly regards as rivals.

For those who profess other aims and ideals than her own, German scorn knew no bounds. This is perhaps nowhere better demonstrated than by the contempt with which Bernhardi treats the efforts of the United States towards international peace. "We can hardly assume," he says, "that a real love of peace prompts these efforts." [6] The German mind cannot even credit the United States, in its happy isolation, with altruism and humanity. The maintenance of peace as a national policy is to their minds incredible:

"Pacific ideals, to be sure, are seldom the real motive of their action. They usually employ the need of peace as a cloak under which to promote their own political aims. This was the real position of affairs at the Hague Congresses, and this is also the meaning of the action of the United States of America, who, in recent times, have earnestly tried to conclude treaties for the establishment of Arbitration Courts, first and foremost with England, but also with Japan, France, and Germany." [7]

These are Bernhardi's views, and he is evidently convinced that each government was trying to outwit the other. For those who imagined otherwise there is a sneer:

"Theorists and fanatics imagine that they see in the efforts

[5] Bismarck's *Reflections and Reminiscences*, English translation, 1899, p. 173.
[6] Bernhardi's *Germany and the Next War*, p. 17.
[7] *Ibid*, p. 17.

of President Taft a great step forward on the path of perpetual peace, and enthusiastically agree with him. Even the Minister for Foreign Affairs in England, with well-affected idealism, termed the procedure of the United States an era in the history of mankind." [8]

Nietzsche with equal ignorance said:

"There is an Indian savagery, a savagery peculiar to the Indian blood, in the manner in which the Americans strive after gold." [9]

A more sorrowful result of the doctrine of the German militarists than their scorn of other nations is their feeling of national isolation,[10] their constant apprehension of hostile designs upon them by other countries. They are poignantly conscious of being thought the political parvenus of Europe, and they believe that the world views them superciliously.

Of the many things irking German spirit during past years none has been accepted with less grace than the existence of certain superior advantages, real or fancied, possessed by other nations. It has been said that the Germans, more than most peoples, should heed the injunction of the Tenth Commandment. Prince Bülow bears witness to "our old vice, envy"; and he quotes the comment of Tacitus upon

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Nietzsche, *The Joyful Wisdom,* English edition, 1910, p. 254.

[10] Dr. J. W. Headlam in his recent pamphlet, *England, Germany and Europe,* says: "This isolation of Germany is generally attributed by German writers to the genius and foresight of Edward VII. For the last twenty years the policy of Germany has indeed displayed every fault. In a position where restraint, dignity, caution, reserve seemed to be dictated, they have been adventurous, unstable, quarrelsome, interfering. In no part of the world could a treaty be made or arrangements discussed but the voice of Germany was heard declaring that no arrangement could be made without her being consulted. . . . The result inevitably was to alienate and alarm each nation in turn, and thereby to create the understandings by which each nation knew that it could reckon on the support of others."

the ancestors of his race: "*Propter invidiam* the Germans destroyed their liberators, the Cherusci." [11] The Germans themselves admit that they have looked with envy and covetousness upon certain rights and possessions of their neighbours. The wide realms and exclusive commercial areas of Russia, of the British Dominions, and of the United States, have appeared to them as imminent dangers to German prosperity. Particularly is this true concerning the United States and her relations with Central and South America, as embodied in that (to German minds) obsolete and ineffective instruments, the Monroe Doctrine. To Berlin Militarists the Monroe Doctrine is only the mere shadow of a scrap of paper; and the American claims based on it are offensive to the German mind.

"The enemy, the superior opponent in the economic rivalry of the nations is North America," wrote Professor Wolff, of Breslau University.[12] It must be remembered that in the German mind, the war of commerce and the war of arms are not to be distinguished. Bismarck said, with his great gift for phrase-making, unsurpassed by any modern, "War is business, and business is war." The same terms are used in describing each, and the actual transition from the one to the other is merely a matter of expediency. To destroy by system and organization, to overpower by force and weight, to be ruthless in so doing, is common to Germany's war methods and business methods. The protective tariff of the United States is no less exasperating to Germany than would be a naval blockade of her ports. This feeling is by no means confined to the Chauvinist and military class. Even the talented Socialist,

[11] Von Bülow, *Imperial Germany*, p. 224.
[12] Wolff, *Das deutsche Reich und das Weltmarket*, 1901.

Richard Calwer, believes that, "Germany occupies no pleasant position in the world," and that, among other perils —

"There is the North American Union, which not only regards South America as its domain, but because of natural, technical, and economic reasons, is in many respects dangerous to us." [13]

For another State to be "superior" in any way is, to minds steeped in the Prussian doctrine of might and power, to make them "dangerous." This obsession of the intimate connection between commerce and war is oddly exemplified in the rhetorical language of another German writer, who is warning Holland that Great Britain and the United States are only waiting their opportunity to seize her colonies:

"Spain has sunk to her knees before the brutal onslaught of America, and Portugal hangs like a fly in the spider's web, mercilessly abandoned to the monopolistic Stock Exchange system of England." [14]

For the most part, however, German hostility to the United States is not based on anything so specific, German writers present no convincing proofs of actual American aggressiveness. To them this is not necessary; rivalry in any form is hostility, and superiority is a menace. Assertion of supreme authority is a challenge; hence the abhorrence of the Monroe Doctrine for itself, apart from the fact that it has blocked the way to German dominion in South America. The claim of the United States to political supervision of the destinies of the South American

[13] Quoted from *Sozialistiche Monatshefte* in Dawson's *The Evolution of Modern Germany*, p. 341.
[14] From *German Ambitions*, by Vigilans sed Æquus.

Republics is, to the German mind, an open act of aggression. It is, indeed, a matter of history that Germany has never recognized the validity of the Monroe Doctrine. She has submitted to its demands, but with ill grace. It has interfered with her plans of colonization. It forced her to look eastward from Brazil to the less alluring spaces of Africa, where the lands suited to white populations were already extensively occupied and the best absorbed.

It was only after the Monroe Doctrine — supported by the combined diplomatic and naval forces of Great Britain and the United States — had interfered with German armed *pourparlers* in Venezuela that the Kaiser fixed his attention elsewhere. Africa could not satisfy his hopes of a Colonial Empire; it could not provide for large German populations; and for a long time it could not pay. He turned to the East — to China, and thereafter much manœuvring and some set-backs which need not be discussed here, the happy accident of the murder of German missionaries gave him the opportunity he needed, and Kiao Chou, which cost him £25,000,000 to develop, gave his country a base of importance in Asia. With its surrender the Kaiser's dream ends, for his day at least. In Morocco he was also unfortunate, but his misfortune cost him no cash, as he acquired no territory; and then came his adventures in Asia Minor and Persia and the consequent necessary interference in the affairs of the Balkans. The harvest of these later ventures is now being reaped on the battlefields of Europe.

It may easily be claimed, therefore, that by justly denying to Germany the right to interfere in the affairs of South America, the United States has a share in the many antecedent causes of the war.

However that may be, it is certain that the first direction of Germany's colonial ambitions was, by preference, towards South America. Though temporarily checked, it is certain that these ambitions have not been relinquished:

"In more than one respect South America is the land of the future; there is more to be got in South America than there is in Africa,"

writes Herr Schmoller, in a book with the significantly Germanic title of *Policy of Commerce and Force.*

"We must at all costs desire that in Southern Brazil, a land of twenty to thirty million Germans may come into being — no matter whether it remains part of Brazil, or forms an independent State, or comes into closer relations with our Empire."

Thereupon Herr Schmoller feelingly quotes from statistics to show the growing preponderance of Germans in Brazil, and refers to the statement of the *Handelsmuseum* that —

"Little by little, slowly and surely, Germany is securing the trade of Bolivia. When she has done that entirely, she will have secured the plenitude of influence, a complete moral and material supremacy, and a colony acquired without war or expense." [15]

In an article in the *Fortnightly Review* for January, 1915, a writer who signs himself "Fabricius," from internal evidence "a man of mark in his day," gives several pages of extracts from a book by Emil Witte, at one time an attaché to the German Embassy in Washington. Mr. Witte's sensational book was published in Leipzig in 1907, and it throws light upon German-American relations and German offi-

[15] Schmoller, quoted by Emil Reich in *Germany's Madness,* p. 56.

cial purposes. Herr Witte declares that, after the difficulty in Manila between Germany and the United States, the German Government encouraged the formation of German veteran societies throughout the United States which, by close inter-connection, could become an organization of great power. He says that on the 6th of October, 1901, Germanism in the United States was organized in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania.

It were better to use Mr. Witte's own words in order to convey exactly what the meaning and purpose of the organization of Germanism in the United States was:

"On that date the 'Deutsch-Amerikanische Nationalbund der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika' was founded. According to its constitution, it endeavours to awaken among the American population of German descent a feeling of unity, to organize it for the purpose of energetically protecting the common interests of Germanism, etc.

"It should be of interest to consider the activity of the German Bund. It agitated energetically with the object of inducing the Government of the United States to intervene in the war between England and the Boers. In support of this agitation it handed to Congress a petition which weighed more than four hundred pounds, and which was more than five miles long.

"An organization, similar in character and scope to that representing all German-Americans, is the 'Centralverband deutscher Veteranen und Kriegerbunde Nord-Amerikas'—the Central Society of German Veterans and Soldier Societies of North America. The principles and aims of that society are similar to that of the parent society. . . .

"Without doubting for a moment the often-asserted loyalty to the United States expressed by the members of the German Soldiers' Societies in the United States, and without dwelling on the reasons why they have been officially distinguished by the German Government by sending them flags, decorations, gracious letters, etc., it must be frankly stated

that *the relations between official Germany and the emigrant subjects of the Emperor, whether they have become citizens of the Republic or not, may lead to serious complications between Germany and the United States, and to unforeseen incidents which at any moment may involve both Powers in serious difficulty. . . .*"

This is a very remarkable statement, but it comes from a former official of the German Government, and it is supported by events which have happened since the beginning of the war. It should also be read in connection with the fact that in 1913 Germany passed a law preserving for a German his nationality even when he has become naturalized in another country. That was a very careful piece of legislation which had more than native German sentiment behind it. The German Press Bureau in the United States has at its command an immense organization representing millions of Germans in the country, and those organizations have been used, as is well known, for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear upon the United States Government in a great number of directions — in attempting to promote legislation which would hamper Great Britain in securing ammunition and supplies from the United States; in regard to contraband; in relation to the purchase of the German ships interned in American ports; and in squeezing the President into a preferential attitude towards Germany by a threat to use the elections for that purpose.

This threat has been denied by those interested in lulling the suspicions of non-Germans in the United States in regard to conspiracy or "undue influence," but that the German-American has sought lately to punish the President and his party for supposed leanings to the Allies is well known and has been widely discussed. The following letter which

appeared in the *North American Review* for January, 1914, is evidence of a substantial character:

"*Sir,*— So far as I am informed you are mistaken in your speculations about the last election. Among the German-American voters the word was passed around from North to South, and from West to East, to vote against the Democratic ticket in order to protest against the obviously one-sided attitude the administration is taking in the present European conflict. I was one of the many who followed this advice, and I can name at least twenty other men who voted the same way. Some of us thought that Mr. Gerard might be a very desirable addition to the Senate, where we hoped he might be influential in bringing about a real neutrality and a greater impartiality in our foreign affairs. I am sure that you will have to reckon with us when you begin to explain why Mr. Gerard 'ran 70,000 ahead of the State ticket.'

"A. BUSSE, Ph.D.,
"New York City." "Professor in Hunter College."

The United States has to decide for itself whether it welcomes an organized foreign settlement in the United States for a purely political object, which is intended to be for the advantage of the mother-country of emigrant Germans. It is to be noted that no such organizations exist among British men in any country to which they have gone, and certainly not to any degree or in any sense in the United States.

It is worth observing also that in the view of Germany, the West Indies is also very attractively situated for its purposes. A professor at Strassburg University has given them his careful consideration, and reports as follows:

"It would give a powerful impulse to our trade and shipping if we had a port of our own in the West Indies, with trade-emporium and coaling station. Such an acquisition is not impossible, as the Danish islands of Sainte Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John have, in a sense, been in the market."

This was written at the time of the Spanish-American War, and the moment seemed very opportune to Professor Waltershausen, of Strassburg.[16]

"Should German diplomacy at Copenhagen prove able to overcome the anti-German resistance of the Danes, now (1898) is the time for us to acquire the islands. The United States are involved with Spain, and have no money to spare."

Three years later another German writer, Herr Dix, called attention to what seemed to him a splendid chance of being "excessively disagreeable" to the United States, by the purchase of the island of St. Thomas from Denmark, noting its great advantages to a "World-Power" which had an interest "in the future Isthmian Canal." It was his opinion that previous negotiations had fallen through, mainly because the United States reckoned on getting the Danish inheritance some fine day without paying for it.[17] In 1912 it seemed as though the chance had come for Germany to achieve the aspirations of Herr Dix; for in May of that year the King of Denmark actually signed a concession to the harbour of St. Thomas to Germany. It is true that as the result of a powerful agitation, the concession was rescinded; but the incident is clear evidence of Germany's ambitious purposes in the Caribbean Sea.

The Monroe Doctrine, it will be observed, is utterly ignored; and it would appear that, in the eyes of these writers, the United States, by its own acts, has voided any justification for a policy of exclusive control over the American continent. This view is not, however, confined to professors and publicists, as

[16] Waltershausen, *Deutschland und die Handelspolitik der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika*, 1898.

[17] Dix, *Deutschland auf den Hochstrassen des Weltwirtschafteverkehrs*, 1901.

German apologists in America now declare. It has august sanction.

In an article already quoted from the *Fortnightly Review* by "Fabricius," a statement on the Monroe Doctrine, which Prince Bismarck, on February 9th, 1896, caused to be printed in the *Hamburger Nachrichten,* is included. It is as follows:

"We are of opinion that that doctrine (the Monroe Doctrine) and the way in which it is now advanced by the American Republic is an incredible impertinence towards the rest of the world. The Monroe Doctrine is merely an act of violence, based upon great strength, towards all American States and towards those European States which possess interests in America. . . . We are under the impression that the great wealth which the American soil had furnished to its inhabitants has caused part of the American legislators to overestimate their own rights, and to underestimate at the same time the right to independence possessed by the other American Powers and by the European Powers as well."

There is no reason to suppose that the attitude of Germany has changed towards the Monroe Doctrine; and it is quite clear that if Great Britain and her Allies should be defeated in this war, the Monroe Doctrine in relation to the policy of Germany would no longer be a matter of inspired protest or of academic inquiry; and that neither Canada, the West Indies, nor South America would, in the German view, be protected by its canons.

Nothing could show Germany's policy more clearly than its attitude in the Spanish-American War, when, had it been possible, she would have prevented the United States from acquiring the Philippines. She had a squadron there as large as that commanded by Admiral Dewey. Admiral Diedrichs interfered with Admiral Dewey's operations, and only the intervention of England prevented a

collision between German and American naval forces — as it had done before in 1889 in the harbour of Apia in Samoa, when the *Calliope,* commanded by Captain Kane, brought effective influence to bear; enforced dramatically by the hurricane which destroyed four German, and three American, warships lying in the harbour.

The following quotation from "Nauticus" in the German Year Book bears not indirectly upon the statement made by Bismarck. It would imply that the United States has some right to be the "protector" of the American continent, but that its claim to uphold the Monroe Doctrine disappeared when it began to pursue a policy of Empire outside the boundaries of the United States.

"The interference of the States with other continents which has actually taken place should make an end of the Doctrine, but Americans will not see it.

"One side of the Monroe Doctrine was, No intervention outside America, and that went with the seizure of the Philippines." [18]

The learned Dr. W. Wintzer long ago decided that the time had come for Germany not merely to ignore this absurd superstition of "the Yankees," but to defy it openly. He gives expression to the widespread German sentiment on this matter in his book, *Germany and the Future of Tropical America,* in which he says that "the moral core" of the Monroe Doctrine disappeared on the day when the document concerning the annexation of the Philippines was signed by President McKinley. Therefore, he assumes that Germany has —

"The right to confront this Greater-American doctrine with a Greater-German one: namely, that European, and

[18] "Nauticus," *Jahrbuch für Deutschlands Seeinteressen.*

among them German, interests exist also in South America, *in case we have the power to assert them.*"

According to Dr, Wintzer, Americans have no importance in South America, and " south of the Isthmus of Panama the Yankees count for little or nothing." He endeavours to show that American trade is falling off there while German trade is growing, and that because of this the United States might as well abandon her interests. Germany, he loudly declares, needs room for her rapidly growing population, and she,—

" Cannot allow herself to be simply dispossessed of her inheritance in one of the most thinly peopled and richest quarters of the globe — South America." [19]

This " inheritance " also, presumably, is to be established by the power to claim it; and with a clank of the mailed fist, always so near to every German professor's writing table, Herr Wintzer lays down the text of his doctrine:

" Equality of treatment with the United States in South America: that is the theory which we, both on principle and as occasion serves, must oppose to the Monroe Doctrine, and which, too, should the moment come, we must defend by force." [20]

With these evidences of German intentions and policy regarding South America before us, it will perhaps be appropriate to recall the exact nature of the document which has in the past been such a stern impediment to their application, and has had sensible influence on the actions of the Powers of the world and on civilization at large. Its terms are specific.

In his famous message to Congress in the year

[19] Wintzer, *Die Deutschen im tropischen America.*
[20] *Ibid.*

1823, when discussing the settlement of claims of Russia, Great Britain and the United States in the Northwest of the American continent, President Monroe said:

"The occasion has been judged proper for asserting as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for further colonization by any European Power."

Discussing the Holy Alliance, the President added:

"We owe, therefore, to candour and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and on just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purposes of oppressing them or controlling in any other manner their destiny by any European power in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States. . . . It is impossible that the Allied Powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness. . . . It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition in any form with indifference."

Troublesome as may be the Monroe Doctrine to Germany or any other Power which has colonial and imperial ambitions in relation to the American continent, it has been justified by events. The fate of Maximilian in Mexico is known to all; and with his

fate was, in some sense, linked that of France; for the failure of Marshal Bazaine's army in Mexico to sustain Maximilian's ambitions and position, had influence in causing Napoleon III to divert the attention of the French people, restless under the check, by a challenge to Germany: with what end the world knows. It is possible that if France had never sent an army to Mexico, this war which now tortures the world might not have occurred. The Franco-Prussian War gave Germany her present ambitions and her cry of "Empire or Downfall."

One prophetically-minded Pan-German, who calls himself "Germania Triumphans," [21] in a book containing a map of the world redistributed according to the author's forecast for 1915, draws a vivid picture of Germany fighting both Great Britain and the United States. According to this seer, the United States is first attacked and conquered, and then Britain, having stood passively by meanwhile, is taken in turn. Five years later another writer, Dr. Eisenhart, making a similar prophecy, thought fit to reverse the sequence. According to him Great Britain will be the first to fall, adding, that then would come the time to reckon with America.

With those to whom such theories appear fustian, agreement is easy; yet it must be remembered that it is just this sort of nonsense which has been thought and spoken and written in Germany for years past. It is the spirit of it which has launched the German people upon their present terrific struggle for World-Empire. With the German failing for "every sort of unpractical dream" goes the fanatical passion for logical conclusions. Who can

[21] "Germania Triumphans." *Ruckblick auf die weltgeschichtlichen Ereifnisse der Jahrs* 1900–1915, *von einem Grossdeutschen*, 1895.

say where these two characteristics may not lead them, if they do not suffer a speedy and permanent check?

The apologists of the German nation to-day are making great efforts to repudiate the past expressions and sentiments of their militarist professors and academic generals. These do not, it is declared, truly represent the essentially peace-loving and unaggressive nature of the German people. In the spectacle of a nation, quoting Goethe and Schiller, whilst acting Bernhardi and Treitschke, there is, however, little appeal to any sense save that of humour.

The same apologists will no doubt try to make light of the concluding paragraph of Treitschke's lecture on the organization of the army in his *Politik:*

"I shall, in conclusion, only point out shortly that the fleet is beginning to-day to gain increased importance, not specially for European war — no one believes any longer that a fight between Great Powers can be decided nowadays by naval battles — but rather for the protection of trade and colonies. *The domination of the transatlantic countries will now be the first task of European battle-fleets.* For, as the aim of human culture will be the aristocracy of the white race over the whole earth, *the importance of a nation will ultimately depend upon what share it has in the domination of the transatlantic world.* Therefore, the importance of the fleet has again grown greater in our days." [22]

"Weltmacht oder Niedergang!" — Some glimpse of the relentless magnitude of the ambition expressed in that cry has been given here, but the full extent of it cannot be foreseen, and all lovers of civilization will hope that it may never be realized. This world would be an unhappy place were it to be ruled by the people to whom, *"The maintenance of peace can never or may never be the goal."*

[22] Treitschke, "The Organization of the Army." Translated by Adam L. Gowans, 1914.

CHAPTER VI

THE OPPORTUNITY

THE development of German power in recent history may be roughly divided into two periods — the Bismarckian era, and the twenty-four years which have elapsed since Bismarck's downfall. Stated differently, the accession of William II was the turning-point in Germany's military programme. As shown in a previous chapter, Prince Bismarck's ambition was limited to the consolidation of Germany's European position. He had dreams of a greater Germany, but as his memoirs and biographies and the public records of his speeches show, he did not make them the basis of policy. Indeed, he carefully curbed ambition and challenge of the British Empire by declaring that the maritime strength of Great Britain was a dominant factor in the peace of the world, and he warned the Reichstag against the " offensive-defensive " policy, which has been the mainspring of Germany's later schemes:

" If I were to say to you, ' we are threatened by France and Russia; it is better for us to fight at once; an offensive war is more advantageous to us,' and ask you for a credit of a hundred millions, I do not know whether you would grant it — I hope not."

It was enough for the great builder of Germany to see that her military strength was equal to the defence of what she had won, to fortify her position by alliances, and, for the rest, to trust to foreign and external conflicts of interests, which he might on oc-

casion judiciously encourage, to give Germany immunity from attack.

The circumstances of the time were favourable for this cautious policy which traded on the troubles of other nations. Great Britain always had before her the vision of Russian columns threatening her Indian Empire; and also the memory of thwarted Russian ambitions at the Congress of Berlin, which might well be, and were for long, mainsprings of Russian policy. There were sources of friction between France and Great Britain in Newfoundland and Africa; while the bombardment of Alexandria, with subsequent excursions into the Soudan, and the disconcerting and humiliating episode of Fashoda, kept the sore open for over twenty years. The Franco-Russian Alliance was still a thing of the future, and an unlikely event. The break-up of the Dreikaiserbund, and the failure of the "reinsurance treaties" with Russia which followed this event, did not at once materially affect Germany's position.[1] It was succeeded by the Triple Alliance, which has lasted so long and with so imposing an appearance, but was so lacking in fundamental purpose and common understanding that one of its personnel boldly abandoned it when cohesion and undivided support were most needed.

Prince Bismarck, however, did not and could not

[1] The Dreikaiserbund: an alliance of the Emperors of Austria, Germany and Russia, dating from the meeting at Skierniewice in 1884. Owing to the antagonistic aims of Austrian and Russian policy the understanding only lasted until 1886. To minimize the consequences of this split Bismarck exerted himself to maintain friendly relations between Germany and Russia by means of what was known as the Re-Insurance Treaty; which, in Prince Bülow's words, "assured a more or less exceptional position for German policy behind the defensive position of the Triple Alliance." Bismarck's successor failed to renew the Treaty, and ultimately this failure led to the Franco-Russian agreement.

foresee the adventurous policy which was to follow his disappearance from the scene. So long as he held office under the old Emperor whom he served so long and so well, Germany was absolutely immune against attack and freed from the need of feverish military development. When the Boulanger Law raised the peace footing of the French army above 500,000 men, while that of Germany was 427,000, and that of Russia 550,000, Bismarck was content to counter with 41,000 men added to the peace establishment for seven years.

The old emperor died, and Frederick his son reigned for only a few months. Had Frederick lived, he would probably have tried to consolidate Germany by constitutional reform; and perhaps he might have succeeded, despite Prussian admission of German political incapacity. But the experiment was never to be tried. William II, a Prussian of the Prussians, a whole-souled Brandenberger, inherited neither his father's sober and trained military capacity nor his liberal opinions, though he possessed an intellectual equipment of a very vigorous and original order. He " threw back " to a more primitive political type. As Alexander burned to expand the kingdom won by Philip into a world-empire, in which he would make all the barbarians Hellenes, so William II accepted Treitschke's teaching that,—

" The greatness and good of the world is to be found in the predominance there of German culture, of the German mind, in a word of the German character."

Bismarck fell, and then, as Prince Bülow has shown, the Kaiser was steadily driven into a policy of aggression. From this policy, even had he wished to do so, he could not escape, however

shrewd his judgment might be; and it was shrewd enough to wait for war, or at least to prevent war until Germany was a power commercially and industrially; until her banks could give her rope enough to hang herself or her enemies.

Under Count Caprivi, who succeeded Bismarck, the peace establishment of the army was again increased, and time and again it has been increased until it stood early in 1914 at the enormous total of 800,000 men. At the same time the term of service was reduced from three years to two, so making conscription less burdensome and enormously increasing the number of trained men. France, no doubt incited by the adventurous and unstable Boulanger, "that man of straw," had given an excuse for Bismarck's addition to the German army; but there has been no such excuse for the additions made during the last twenty years. During this period France, with the utmost efforts, has never been able to keep up an establishment of more than 545,000 men, with a war strength of 4,000,000, or about two-thirds of the German war establishment.

Contemporaneously with this vast increase of the German army came the development of colonial ambition; the acquisition of oversea territory; and the foundation of a navy, the growth of which has set the world agape. Germany's territorial acquisitions were, in themselves, of no great immediate value; but as Prince Bülow more than once suggests, they are of value as points of support, as coaling-stations and "jumping-off" places. The most notable adventure, however, was the exploitation of the Bagdad railway, of which the ex-Chancellor speaks with enthusiasm: [2]

[2] *Imperial Germany*, p. 116.

"This threw open to German influence and German enterprise a field of activity between the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf, on the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and along their banks. . . . If one can speak of boundless prospects anywhere, it is in Mesopotamia."

As has been shown in earlier pages, this stride towards the South-East was a main factor in the present war.

At the same time the Kaiser made a proclamation to Islam. When it is remembered that his Moslem subjects may be counted by hundreds, it would be farcical, were it not pregnant with tragic implications:

"May the Sultan and the three hundred million Mussulmans scattered over the earth be assured that the German Emperor will always be their friend."

That was the *Irade* of the new seeker for the riches of the Orient, the new adventurer into the Asiatic world, envious of those who had been there for generations, making a bold bid for recognition in fields where at the time he had no footing. The inner menace of this proclamation made at Damascus by the Kaiser in the year 1898 is too obvious to be stated here.

Excepting in Mesopotamia, the intrinsic value of the new German Colonies was trifling; but they were of enormous value to German policy. They enabled the Kaiser to speak of his "Colonial Empire," and of the urgent necessity of building a great fleet to protect it from envious rivals. That there was not a nation in the world which would sacrifice the lives of a single brigade to hoist its flag at Dar-es-Salaam or Swakopmund did not matter; it was enough for the Kaiser to pretend that German Colonies were coveted by others and that their trade with the

Fatherland had to be maintained. His estimate of human credulity was quite accurate. He not only persuaded his own people that a huge navy was indispensable for their Imperial security, but he managed to persuade a large number of British people as well. Prince Bülow, in a passage already quoted, has explained how essential it was not to ruffle British susceptibilities while the German navy was in its infancy; so the loud talk of Germany's Colonial Empire and the duty of protecting it duped the British people into careless acquiescence as it grew stronger. Some there were, indeed, who saw and proclaimed the menace of German ship-building, but they made their warning to deaf ears. Prince Bülow, in his notable book, quotes with point a remark of the *Daily Chronicle:*

"If the German Fleet had been smashed in October, 1904, we should have had peace in Europe for sixty years."

Millions of Pacifists to-day, seeing what is now forward, must regret that it did not happen ten years ago, if Germany was determined to make war as now we know without peradventure she meant to do.

There is nothing to be gained by following the German navy in the making, or compiling tables of strengths and classes of ships. It is enough to say that in seven years the German navy was already a menace, and that in seventeen it upset the calculations of naval experts all over the world. Great Britain had to alter her standard of naval supremacy from the two-Power standard to the two-keel standard, and from that to the standard of 16 to 10; Germany's naval strength alone being the basis of the calculation.

Admiration for this stupendous effort cannot blind us to the crime against international equity of which

it was the product. The ultimate object of the German Government is no longer a matter of speculation. It was revealed by the German Chancellor to Sir Edward Goschen on the 29th of July, 1914. Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg then told our Ambassador that if England remained neutral Germany would not deprive France of territory, but she could not give a similar undertaking with respect to French Colonies. It thus appears that the German navy was not intended to attack England directly and at first, but was to enable Germany to crush France and win a Colonial Empire at her expense. Afterwards? As to that the German doctrine is on record: crush France first, and then Great Britain, exposed to attack from across the Channel at Calais, for which the German legions are now vainly striving, would be an easy prey.

It is instructive to note how, as the German octopus grew in strength, it began to thrust its feelers into the affairs of all the world. It has been the Kaiser's aspiration that nothing should happen anywhere without Germany's approval. The first manifestations of this high resolve were tentative — the Venezuela demonstration, the Kruger telegram, the Persian scheme, the Kaiser's dramatic visit to Morocco, to Jerusalem. Time after time the feelers were put out, as preliminary trials of strength, to be withdrawn after the experiment; sometimes, as at Agadir, with great loss of prestige. While this was going on there were underground activities of conspiracy and incitement to revolution started among the natives of India; among the Mussulmans of Egypt, and also among the disaffected elements of South Africa which, as the world knows, succeeded in fomenting a rebellion, perilous in its promise and proportions, futile in performance. Its defeat has

been accompanied by an exposure of German conspiracy, which should be evidence to neutral countries of Germany's long-matured designs to make war and conquer the British Empire.

So the work went on, and the navy meanwhile grew, until at last the German Emperor was inspired to proclaim himself "Emperor of the Atlantic."

Germany's preparations were all but complete. Her war-machine on land was pronounced fit as hands could make it; her navy, if still unable to meet that of England on the open sea, was at least able to cripple her movements in the unlikely event of her hostility; and it was also equal to any other task which might be imposed upon it. Two of the three sanctions of the new creed were assured. War would be an Advantage, and the Power was there; but what of the Opportunity?

The questions of Power and Opportunity, indeed, were correlative. Strength equal to one set of conditions might be unequal to the strain of another. In a normal Europe, awake to Germany's real aims, it might be doubtful whether German power was equal to German aspirations. It was, therefore, necessary to wait for a propitious conjunction of the political planets. This occurred in 1914. European conditions became normal then. A very brief survey will show how Germany came to think that in June, 1914, the moment had at last come to put her fate to the touch. She must indeed have thought them extremely happy for her purpose to have found the cause of war in a Slav question which, being certain to set Russia in a flame against her, was little likely to stir enthusiasm in Italy, her partner in the Triple Alliance. For Italy, having offended Turkey by invading Tripoli, would hardly care to offend the Slavs as well, especially as the re-

sult of a successful war would be to make hated Austria supreme on the Adriatic. Against this Germany would naturally set the enthusiasm of Austria for a war of revenge for the murder of an able and popular heir to the throne of the Dual Monarchy; while she would bear in mind the advanced age of the Emperor Francis Joseph, and the very uncertain and disquieting consequences of his death. Looking to the condition of her possible opponents, however, she had, on balance, some well-founded reasons for thinking that all was favourable to her design, or at least would never be more favourable.

In South Eastern Europe the Balkan States were exhausted by the war with Turkey and by subsequent internecine conflict, which had been secretly fomented by Germany and Austria, to secure the disruption of the Balkan League and to save Turkey from the worst consequences of defeat. Bulgaria, ruled by a German and antagonistic to Serbia, would certainly not help the latter, and might perhaps attack her. Greece was preoccupied with Albania; and Roumania, the one Balkan State emerging unscathed after 1913, was under the rule of a Hohenzollern, who might be trusted to restrain for the time being Roumania's purposes as to Transylvania.

Belgium, where (it had been determined) the first blow must be struck, had shown signs that she would not passively suffer the violation of her neutrality. She had been making preparations to strengthen her army and her fortresses. Her system of conscription, however, had been in force but two years, her army was only in its infancy. To wait much longer might make the invasion of Belgium more difficult. It has indeed proved difficult enough.

The internal conditions of Russia, where German hopes, long encouraged by the immense influence of

German officials in every department of Russian government, had died at last because of the alliance with France and England, were, as usual, somewhat mysterious and conjectural. Socially and industrially there were no visible signs of any abatement of the hostility of races and classes or of any decline in revolutionary sentiment; indeed, a serious strike was in progress in the summer of 1914. There were, however, fears that the great agrarian and other reforms might in time produce greater social harmony in the Tsar's dominions. The internal conditions of Russia could hardly be worse, and they might become better. Also there were reasons for believing that the Russian Government would have great difficulty in finding ready money for a war. As to her military position, Russia had recovered with great rapidity from her Manchurian disaster. She had learned a lesson from it; and Germany was very well aware that she was building strategic railways and reconstructing her army upon admirable lines; though the completeness of that reconstruction was not suspected, as time and events have proved. If Russia was to be faced, no time could be better than the present. Every month that passed would weigh down the scales against Germany.

When Germany turned to observe her western rivals the omens of success were still more favourable. France was in the throes of political strife, tortured by internal anxieties, excited and dismayed by the murder of M. Calmette and the resignation of M. Caillaux. One strong Ministry had fallen, to be succeeded by another, admittedly a makeshift. The country also, as a whole, was divided over the question of the army; and although the final decision had been to strengthen it, the necessary steps to that end had hardly yet been taken. Grave accusations

of corruption and inefficiency, resulting in a grievous deficiency of military equipment, had been made; and there were ominous confessions of financial stringency. The French army, therefore, appeared badly prepared for emergencies, while the political state of the country was chaotic. That the French would fight with all the fire of revenge and the courage of despair was certain; that their resources would be equal to their valour was extremely doubtful. Of course, the struggle would be intensified by the intervention of Russia, with which Germany was not confronted in 1870. Still, with France unready and the mobilization of Russia notoriously and traditionally unwieldy, the French armies could be crushed and Paris taken before it became necessary to meet the slow-moving armies of the East. While on land, the position might not be as favourable as in 1870, there was, however, a German fleet in being which would more than redress the balance. Forty-four years ago the small German navy was pinned in its harbours; now it could take the sea, ravage the many vulnerable places on the coast of France, and destroy her commerce.

In these latter calculations Germany had to take into account the attitude of Great Britain; but, appraising the conditions of that country, she saw the fairest presage of success, the most convincing signs that the Day, to which she had drunk so often, had dawned at last. The conditions in Great Britain, as Germany viewed them, gave ample promise that she might, perhaps of her own choice, but more assuredly by force of circumstances, adopt a neutral attitude. They actually encouraged the fond belief that, even if neutrality was impossible, Britain would prove powerless to give much help to her friends of the Entente, or indeed to avert her own ruin.

German opinion was permeated by Treitschke's belief that the British Empire was only a bubble to be pricked. England had shown no ability in welding it together; the waving of Union Jacks and the singing of the National Anthem did not connote solidarity. The colossus which bestrode the world had a forehead of brass and feet of brittle clay. It was an imposture. "A thing that is wholly a sham," said Treitschke of England, "cannot in this universe of ours endure for ever. It may endure for a day, but its doom is certain, there is no room for it in a world governed by valour, by the Will to Power."

Nor were portents lacking that the end of the Empire was nearing without the pressure of outside force or attack. German publicists discerned signs of the "centrifugal tendency" of the British Dominions. As we now know, Germany had been sowing seeds of disloyalty in South Africa, and hoped to see a bountiful return. She was also busy in Ireland and with the Irish-Americans. It was her view that in a moment of enthusiasm the Canadian Government had promised to build battleships; but the people had refused to be led into the adventure, or at least would only build Canadian ships for local use, not British ships for world-uses. The Australasian Colonies were grumbling about the neglect of the Pacific and the falsification of promises by the British Admiralty. The excuse that the British navy was wanted nearer home only made matters worse; the Dominions would hardly accept the doctrine that their safety was to be secured in the North Sea; deserted by the parent, the children would fend for themselves.

The German political scouts saw, and exaggerated out of all recognition, the discords between various members of the Imperial family throughout the

world. South Africa and India were at loggerheads over the question of the British Indians; Lord Hardinge had made a speech in which he championed the Indians against the harsh action, the unfriendly legislation of another great country in the Empire; Canada and India were waxing warm over a similar controversy; while the Imperial Government was distraught by anxiety and apparently powerless to heal the quarrel. India was honeycombed with secret societies, agitators reviled the British Raj, even independence was whispered in the bazaars. Also there was Egypt, chafing under British rule, its budding democracy striving to burst into flower, its Khedive conspiring with the enemies of Lord Kitchener. The wish becoming father to the thought, Germany discerned in Egypt the real intellectual influences of Islam, only awaiting a sign from Constantinople to stir up the Moslem world to a holy war. Intrigue was doing its work, aided by corruption; the emissaries of Germany were sowing the black seed from the Delta to the sources of the Nile; and they were confident of a bounteous harvest. Apparently not in the darkest days of 1857 was England's position so desperate. Everywhere, according to the German field-glasses, signs of disruption in the Empire were visible.

As Teuton eyes saw it all, things were no better at the heart of the Empire. In the Teutonic view the British army was "contemptible." Whatever traditions of glory it once possessed had been smirched by the South African Campaign. A quarter of a million men, splendidly equipped, had been held at bay for nearly three years by a handful of farmers. In that war British soldiers had surrendered when only four or five per cent. of the fighters had been actually shot; while the loss of a few hun-

dred men in an action plunged England into the depths of misery. The nation had grown soft. Inadequate as the army had shown itself in valour and numbers, yet it had been still further reduced by the Government in power since 1906. Was not Germany assured by the Press of England that the territorial army had never come to its full strength, and was diminishing day by day! Even powerful patriotic plays, showing the horrors of invasion, could not lure a handful of this degenerate people from football matches to a couple of hours' drill each week. Lord Roberts was looked upon as something between a victim of senility and a criminal, when he advocated, not conscription, but a general system of civil military training. Was it not clear that no responsible politician would endanger his future by advocating so unpopular a scheme? England was the platform of the most fantastic Pacifist doctrines. Many of her most prominent public men were always ingeminating peace at any price. War with a European power was regarded as unthinkable, and preparation for war was opposed to civic liberty. Some wretched youths, who had thrown up a promising future in New Zealand rather than bow to the tyranny of the drill-sergeant, were paraded by a leading journal in Trafalgar Square as martyred evangelists.

So soulless had the British race become (to the German mind) that when they saw their sovereignty of the sea assailed, and themselves threatened with famine, they could not bring themselves to build against their rivals. They preferred to make proposals for a reduction of armaments and to suggest a naval holiday. There were even some who urged that England should disarm in order to set a good example to other nations. Such a people, it was

argued in Berlin, were in the last degree unlikely to take up arms in other people's quarrels.

But even if they could pluck up sufficient spirit, their political conditions and divisions would prevent them from entering into war. Never in British history were the great parties of the State so bitterly opposed to one another; never were they so separated by internecine hatreds. Antagonism had come to the point of civil war in Ireland. There were a hundred thousand men in Ulster pledged to resist the Home Rule Bill by force, drilling openly under the command of British officers, smuggling in arms under the nose of the blockading British fleet. Also there were twice as many Nationalist Volunteers drilling and smuggling arms, and resolved to fight if Home Rule was not granted. There had been bloodshed in the streets of Dublin, where soldiers had fired on gun-runners; the army itself was infected by schism. There had been events at the Curragh, styled "mutiny" by some prominent Ministers. At the best these things showed that the army was undoubtedly disaffected. The King himself, appalled at the situation, had endeavoured without success to bring about an accommodation.

The German, high and low, prince and plebeian, visitors and spies, Krupp's and commercial travellers, believed that civil war in the British isles was imminent — a question of weeks or days. Nothing but a miracle could avert it; and that miracle would involve the fall of the Liberal Ministry. To this particular event Berlin statesmen had looked forward with apprehension. "When the Unionists, with their greater fixity of purpose, replace the Liberals at the helm, we must be prepared for a vigorous assertion of power by the island Empire," wrote one of their watchmen on the tower. Whether he was

right or wrong matters nothing. He expressed the German view, and that view impelled Germany to see in the state of British affairs encouragement to an opportunity for aggression.

That Germany miscalculated; that Russia, better prepared than was thought, would not cringe before the mailed fist in 1914 as she did in 1909; that France would not give way as she did in 1905; that Great Britain possessed hidden resources of vigour and unity which would in emergency burst through every paralysing influence; that the British Empire was not a sham, but a reality; that Belgium valued honour more than safety: all this has been demonstrated. Germany, however, saw the situation through spectacles of her own making; she tested the ideals of other nations by her own materialism; she believed that the Hour had struck, and that with it had come the man, the Hohenzollern, on whom "the Spirit of the Lord had descended"; who was at last to find his place in the sun as he had ever held it in the lime-light. War was to Germany's advantage now; by her own efforts and the weakness of her rivals the power for conquest was in her hands; the opportunity only was wanted. That opportunity was supplied by the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Serajevo.

CHAPTER VII

THE CLOUD IN THE EAST

If hypnotism were an implement of state-craft, it might seem as though the crime of Serajevo was "suggested" by the war-makers of Berlin, so admirably did it serve their purpose. France, the old enemy, was in arrears with military reform; she was financially embarrassed, and vexed by intestine troubles; Germany, on the other hand, was ready to the last button on the tunic, the last torpedo for her submarines, even to the fire-raising confetti which would make arson a fine art. The great guns, before which the stoutest fortresses would crumble into powder, were concealed in the casemates of Essen; their emplacements were already built in the suburban gardens of Antwerp, Maubeuge and elsewhere. German agents had swept Ireland clear of horses during the Spring, and had filled the national granaries with abundant food supplies; German financiers, at home and abroad, were ready at a moment's notice to bring the subtle and delicate machinery of the money market into the service of their country; and they did actually open their financial campaign in London during the month of July. And now, like a god out of the machine, came the murder of the heir to a great throne; member of a family whose tragedies rival those of the Atridæ and have aroused the sympathy of the world for the venerable chief of the House of Hapsburg. It was beyond peradventure that mankind would cry out against the assassination of a prince of proved capacity, of rep-

utable life and high ideals; who, it had been hoped, would save the countries of the Dual Monarchy from disintegration, and who favoured constitutional reform. Also, this crime had been committed by men of a race stained by the memory of an even darker deed, and, because of it, excommunicated for a time by civilized nations.

In one respect at least German calculations were accurate. The world was shocked at the deed of the 28th of June. It was a crime without circumstance of extenuation. The grievances between Austria and Serbia, however, have not been all on one side. If Serbia has been a turbulent neighbour, her turbulence and animosity have had behind them a great and ambitious patriotism and a deep concern for the welfare of the Serb population of Bosnia, Herzegovina and Hungary; and her offences have been largely, if not mainly, the products of Austrian intolerance, tyranny and oppression. Again and again had Serbia's natural aspirations for commercial and political expansion been thwarted by her powerful neighbour. The absorption of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which destroyed the vision of a greater Serbia, was bad enough; but to have been arbitrarily deprived of a sea-port on the Adriatic, which she had fairly won by her valour, was bitterly worse. The treatment of her fellow-Slavs in Croatia had long exasperated Serbia; had been a goad in her side; and she knew that the sympathy of the outside world had not been denied her in her indignation, while Russia would give her firm moral support at least. The unprejudiced historian will probably decide that, as between Austria and Serbia, the balance of right is on the side of the smaller State. Still, not all the wrongs which Serbia has suffered could excuse the assassination of the Archduke Franz

Ferdinand. It was not only a savage crime, but it was aimless and unjust; for the victim was the one man of power in his country who most sympathized with his future Slavonic subjects, and was most determined to do them justice. Europe was revolted by the aimless injustice of the deed, as well as by its brutality. So late as the 27th of July, 1914, Sir Edward Grey told our Ambassador in Paris that —

"The dispute between Austria and Serbia was not one in which we felt called upon to take a hand,—"

while four days earlier he had informed our Ambassador in St. Petersburg that he did not consider that English opinion would or ought to sanction going to war over a Serbian quarrel. Even Russia agreed that Austria was entitled to guarantees from Serbia for future good behaviour.

It is not too late to recapture in all its poignancy the memory of that catastrophe which fell upon the nations out of a clear sky. People in most countries, execrating the murder of the Archduke, had read with sympathy of the sorrow of his people, and had turned from the account of his midnight burial to other happenings of sensational interest — the trial of Madame Caillaux and the Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace. It was understood that some Pan-Serbian conspiracy had been unearthed; but as conspiracies are not uncommon in Balkan politics it was not a sensation of compelling interest. Foreign correspondents talked of activity in the Chancelleries, but the world shrugged its shoulders. To the general public diplomatists are men who beguile their abundant leisure by constructing mountains out of molehills with reprehensible toil, and by smoothing the mountains back into molehills with repentant and commendable skill. Even

the presentation of the epoch-making Austrian Note did not greatly agitate the public mind. Serbia had practically accepted most of it, and she was ready to submit the unsettled points to arbitration; while Sir Edward Grey had suggested a Conference, to which France and Italy were agreed and to which Germany was said to be favourable. The business seemed susceptible of easy accommodation. Even when the Share Market slumped, there were only a few chronic pessimists who darkly hinted at deep international trouble. Fewer still had any idea of the feverish correspondence between the Capitals. They went about their ordinary business as did the citizens of Herculaneum on the eve of its destruction, conscious that there were clouds in the sky, but convinced that the hubble-bubble of the diplomatic heights would pass. The whole Balkan affair was, after all, so simple. Serbia would be taught a lesson in propriety; and there would be an end to it. From their standpoint they were quite justified in their view: that would have been the end of it had not the ambitious and exultant Camarilla of Berlin determined otherwise.

Those who accuse the German War Lords of recklessness in provoking a European war, and folly in selecting as its cause a Balkan question, which might alienate Italian sympathy, do inadequate justice to that formidable circle. Whatever demerits may be theirs, recklessness is not one of them. On the contrary, the cold calculation of their unchanging purposes is one of their most repellent characteristics. As Carlyle said of Goethe, their sky is a vault of ice. They had, of course, no desire for a general war; they proposed to devour their rivals one by one, as one sucks the leaves of an artichoke. For this purpose nothing better could be found than

a quarrel which would command natural sympathy for their injured ally; which would excite Western Europe but little, and England least of all, whatever might be the effect upon Russia.

But there were other reasons, more direct and potent, which made a Balkan question peculiarly convenient. It would be an excuse for a punitive expedition, with the consequent aggrandisement of Germanic influence in Southeastern Europe; and it would furnish the opportunity, when desired, to launch the larger war-scheme. It might, indeed, offend Italy to see an extension of Austrian influence on the Adriatic; but Italy was a doubtful ally at the best; and her displeasure would be more than balanced by Austrian gratitude and Austria's subsequent and complete subserviency. Valuable, indeed essential, however, as was Austrian loyalty to the Triple Alliance, there were other advantages, not less important, to be gained by the punishment of Serbia and the shattering of her integrity.

Of all the smaller Slav States Serbia is the most formidable, of all the Balkan States it has been the least friendly to German interests. With her out of the way, or weakened by a judicious partition of portions of her territory between Austria, Roumania and Bulgaria, the two latter States being ruled by German dynasties, Teutonic influence would be dominant from the Danube to the Golden Horn, and a solid wall would be built against Russian designs and influence. The great Slav Power would be effectually barred from the Mediterranean. True, Austria had renounced all designs of territorial aggrandisement at the expense of Serbia; but, as Dr. Dillon, than whom there is no more alert authority in Eastern politics, is careful to point out, she had renounced them for herself alone. She had not

renounced them on behalf of the other Balkan States, nor would her self-denying ordinance deprive her, in good time, of laying hands on Salonika.

So much for Austria. But what of Germany? It was not altruism, or the vision of what might come in the still distant future of a Central European Federation, which drove her to make this Balkan question her own. With the Eastern Mediterranean dominated by Teutonic influence, her plans of aggression in Morocco would be carried out in a vacuum, when France was crushed; as crushed she must be at the most convenient moment. But there was a more immediate and valuable advantage to be gained by bringing Southeastern Europe under the Germanic yoke. Through the Balkans lay the straight road to the Hellespont and Asia Minor; to those regions on the Tigris and Euphrates of which Prince Bülow has written with such enthusiasm; to the proud position of Protector of Islam; to the very citadel of England's Eastern Empire. To the German, dreaming of expansion in the rich plains of Mesopotamia, of advance to the Southern waters of Asia, the reversion of the isles of Greece to their ancient nationality was unendurable; for Greece is strongly Anglophile and fiercely antagonistic to the Turk. She might even in time regain a hold upon some of her Asiatic possessions. This undesirable development would be thwarted by a skilful revision of the Treaty of Bucharest. Thus history repeated itself. Just as, five hundred years before the Christian era, the politics of Asia Minor sent Darius and Xerxes into Macedonia and Hellas, so to-day the politics of Asia Minor induced William of Germany to prosecute an aggressive policy in Southeastern Europe.

There were, then, many advantages to be gained

by making the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand a cause of war. Some were positive — the check to Russian influence, the satisfaction and fulfilment of Austrian policy, the furtherance of Germany's Asiatic ambitions; others were negative, but not less important. Russia might stand aside, as she did in 1909; and if she did not still she was unready for war. Even were she better prepared than was thought, the cause of quarrel was not unlikely to alienate the sympathies of her Western Allies, neither of whom was in a position to make war unless compelled to do so. With all this in mind, it is not surprising that the advisers of the Kaiser resolved to strike.

It may be objected that this is only theory; and that Germany is not to be condemned on plausible enemy theories credited to her, as Thucydides embodied his own ideas in the speeches of Pericles and the Corcyrean Embassy. These theories, however, do fit in to a nicety with what Germany was supposed to want, and with what she actually did; for, as will be seen, hers was the master-mind and hers the guiding hand throughout the month of July, 1914. She has, indeed, confessed as much. In the book *The Truth about Germany*, prepared for the American public, which is not a compilation of official despatches, but a bowdlerized and manipulated statement of the German case, there are some remarkable admissions made by the distinguished committee who edited it and were responsible for it.

We are informed in those pages that when Austria apprised Germany of her view of the situation and asked for Germany's opinion, she was given "*a completely free hand in her action towards Serbia.*" There is no evidence whatever that Germany ever counselled such prudence and moderation as would

avert a great war. On the contrary, Germany avows that she was "perfectly aware that a possible war-like attitude of Austria-Hungary against Serbia might bring Russia upon the field," and yet she told Austria "with all her heart," that "any action . . . would meet with our approval."

Later, when Russia was willing to retire from the field if the Austro-Serbian quarrel was referred to England, France, Germany and Italy, Germany was the one Power which refused to consent. And finally, when at the eleventh hour, Russia and Austria were advancing towards agreement, and when Count Szaparay, the Austrian Ambassador at Petrograd, had agreed to mediation on the main points at issue between Austria and Serbia, Germany bolted the door on peace by declaring war with Russia. Germany has been throughout the moving spirit, Austria no more than the subservient but no less culpable friend and abettor.

Before proceeding, however, to fix responsibility on the proper shoulders by an analysis of the negotiations preceding the war, it will be well to survey events in a broad perspective.

Two dates at once attract attention — the 28th of June and the 28th of July, 1914. On the first date the Archduke and his wife were murdered; on the latter Austria broke off diplomatic relations with Serbia. How were the intervening thirty days employed? The answer is significant and instructive. Twenty-five days were occupied by police officials in investigating the circumstances of the crime; five — only five — were devoted to correspondence between Vienna and Belgrade. Negotiations on which hung the issues of peace and war, and that — as was soon apparent — a war which would change the face of a Continent and vitally affect the destinies of the world,

were crowded into one hundred and twenty hours. That, moreover, is not all, or even the worst. On the fateful 28th of July, the Serbian Minister at Belgrade handed the Serbian reply to the Austrian Ambassador. It is a lengthy document, conceding much; modifying some points; in others suggesting international arbitration; in one instance asking for legal proofs of charges against accused persons — altogether a document warranting calm and deliberate consideration. Yet Baron von Giesl, the Austrian Minister, digested it, returned to his Legation, packed his luggage, removed the archives and was seated in the train within forty minutes. This then is the time-table for July: Secret Police enquiry twenty-five days; diplomatic intercourse one hundred and twenty hours; considering the Serbian reply and removal of Legation, forty minutes!

It has been urged by Count Albert Mensdorff, the Austrian Ambassador in London, that Serbia might have done something in those thirty days to propitiate Austria and justify herself by a voluntary offer to institute an enquiry into the crime. It is not quite easy to see how she could have done so. Certainly it would have been her bounden duty to take the initiative had the crime been committed in her own territory, or by her own subjects. It was, however, committed by Austrian subjects in an Austrian city. Had Serbia expressed deep contrition, so acknowledging guilt, and made offers of investigation, the act would have been described as that of a criminal, attempting to compound his offence, seeking by transparent hypocrisy to escape its proper consequences.

It is said, perhaps with truth, that certain Serbian state officials were concerned in the atrocious crime; but Serbia was not officially aware of that accusa-

tion until the 24th of July. The information had been elicited from the assassins — not very reputable or reliable witnesses — in the course of a secret investigation, from which Serbia, in common with the rest of Europe, was excluded. When the names of implicated Serbians were mentioned, the Serbian Government promised to punish them, with the very proper proviso that proofs of their guilt should be forthcoming. It is hard to see what more any Government could have done.

There is absolutely no evidence that the Serbian Government had foreknowledge of, or complicity with, the crime. The secrecy of the Austrian proceedings alone precludes such a consideration. Could Austria openly have fixed even a vague suspicion upon the Serbian Government, how readily would she have done it! The whole world would have been summoned to Serajevo to see the unfolding of the hideous plot. Instead of that, the trial was held within closed doors, the Press was excluded; nothing reached the public without the sanction of the official censors. What little did leak out went to show that the deed was committed by young men who grafted anarchical doctrines upon Pan-Serbian enthusiasms; who were not only set to see Serbia greater, but were moved to avenge the tyranny under which their fellow-Slavs were groaning in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.

If, in murder, the question of motive be important, it is Austria, not Serbia, that should stand arraigned for the assassination of the Grand Duke. Serbia had nothing to gain, but everything to lose by it. She had her grievances against Austria; but she was not insane enough to think they could be avenged by the murder of the one man in Austria who had stood her friend in 1913. She could not hope to repair

the damage which Austria had done her in the past by giving her the best excuse for inflicting still greater damage. Just recovering from a devastating war, she would not invite another, with a neighbour tenfold stronger than herself. She was engaged in important railway negotiations, and was making arrangements with Montenegro of vital interest to her future. She would hardly choose that moment for incurring the risk of war by participation in a crime which would alienate mankind.

If we turn to Austria, we shall find a far readier explanation of the death of the Archduke. Revenge is the oldest motive of crime in the history of the world, and this would appear to have been a crime of revenge. This is not the place to tell the story of the ten million Slavonic subjects of the Dual Monarchy, nor would it be a pleasant story to tell if it were the place. It is a tale of repression and terrorism which would have disgusted Jeffreys; of perjury and corruption which would have turned the stomach of Titus Oates. The Press was persecuted, political leaders were threatened, the law courts were debauched, the sanctity of the ballot boxes was invaded, and when all this failed the Constitution itself was suspended. It came at last to this that the very school-children revolted and refused to be taught under such a reign of terror. Were there no grounds for vengeance here, no materials for crime, even if it took the blind, hateful, and indefensible form of murder?

The most that can be alleged against Serbia is this — that to her were turned the eyes of Austria's Serbian helots; that she stood for their racial ideals; that, so long as she remained, hope for the future was not dead. That Serbia was not ignorant of this sentiment is not to be imagined; to think that

she had no visions of a day — as Germany had visions of a " Day "— when Bosnia, Herzegovina and Croatia might, as the result of a great European upheaval, be united with Serbia and form an important State, is to suppose her more than human. But to charge her with seeking to attain such ends by the shameful murder of an upright prince, reputedly friendly to her, is to brand her as imbecile.

Nevertheless that is what Austria set out to do, and has done. Without accepting or suggesting the dreadful suspicion that the murder of the Archduke was committed at the instance, or at least with the tacit connivance of any government, Serbian or other; it is clear that Austria resolved to make the crime an excuse for depriving Serbia of her position as an independent State and as the rallying-point of Pan-Serbian aspirations. She had been long preparing to seize on such an opportunity; and she had redoubled her preparations of recent years, in the hope that the chance would come as a result of a Balkan war. It is notorious that during the first Balkan war in 1912 Austria was weighing the chances of a conflict with Serbia and Russia; and that her Government was studiously inflaming the public mind with stories of the shameful maltreatment of the Austrian Consul Prochaska at Prizren — stories which proved to be wholly imaginary.

But the plot dates back in reality to 1909. In that year the famous High Treason Trial took place at Agram, when certain Croats were accused of a treasonable Pan-Serbian propaganda. Soon afterwards, Dr. Friedjung, the historian, published an article in which he asserted that the leaders of the Croatian movement were in the pay of the Serbian Government; and that in fact Serbia was promoting and subsidizing revolution in Austria. The docu-

ments on which this charge was based were given to him by the Austrian Foreign Office.

Had these documents been genuine, Austria would have had cause for war; but they were not genuine. Dr. Friedjung was sued for libel, and it was established by proofs which not even an Austrian Court could ignore, that the documents were forgeries, concocted in the Austrian Legation at Belgrade. The Austrian Minister in Belgrade, Count Forgach, was openly accused in the Austrian Parliament of being a forger and guilty of the acts of an *Agent Provocateur*, one of the most odious offences of which man can be guilty.

In most countries such a charge would be enough to drive a man from public life, or in some indulgent societies to consign him to a sphere offering no scope for such peculiar energies. Not so in Austria. Though almost incredible, it is true that Count Forgach was afterwards selected to be one of the chief directors of Balkan policy at the Foreign Office in Vienna. Within a few years of his appointment, Austria has made war upon Serbia, on grounds constructed by a hidden inquisition, and of which, when besought to do so, she gave no proof whatever. There is a curious and sinister likeness between the methods of 1909 and 1914, which must strike even the most careless observer.

Count Forgach was engaged in congenial work during those eventful and historical thirty days immediately before this war. There are ugly hints of what preceded them; for the present purpose it is enough to consider the incidents following upon the death of the Archduke. What happened is briefly this. A man, notoriously without scruple, set himself to make out a case against Serbia. It took him twenty-five days to do it, working like a mole in the

police cells at Serajevo. These days were occupied in drawing the indictment against Serbia. The accused was given forty-eight hours in which to plead guilty and be sentenced. In forty minutes the judge heard the prisoner's reply, gave it mature consideration, returned to his home, packed up his belongings and was on his way to the railway station. It was not for nothing that Count Forgach's previous performances had been rewarded, and that he had been encouraged to try again. Once before he had failed; this time he succeeded.

The case against Austria is deadly, from the circumstances, considerations and evidence already given; but that the murder of Franz Ferdinand only gave Austria courage to do what she had resolved to do in 1913 if she secured adequate support, is beyond question; and we shall presently offer the proofs of it. It emboldened her to cross the Rubicon, in which she had already dipped her feet only to shrink back when she found the water very cold.

During the whole of the pre-war negotiations we find Austria and Germany manœuvring for a moral vantage-ground; Austria posing as an aggrieved Power, righteously resolved to punish a grave offence and to protect herself from criminal intrigues; Germany posing as a loyal friend, whose loyalty was abused by hostile States, and made the implement by which she was treacherously driven into war. Since the war began, however, the line of defence has been modified. Comparatively little is heard about Austria's grievance against Serbia, but very much is heard about the complete innocence of Germany. The semi-official apology for Germany's action, *The Truth about Germany,* issued under the authority of Prince Bülow and an imposing committee of eminent Teutons, begins with the bold asser-

tion that Germany's love of peace is so strong as to be an inborn and integral part of the people. Individual writers of light and leading in Germany never cease harping on that theme. In their recitals Germany had no aggressive designs, no desire for territorial aggrandisement, no thought of war, no aim or object but to remain at peace with all mankind. True, she went to war, but unwillingly. True, she broke off negotiations with Russia and France, and struck the first blow at Belgium; but she only did it as a lonely wayfarer might take the initiative against footpads manœuvring for advantage. Never were nations so misunderstood and maligned as the Teutonic Powers; never in history was there a blacker treachery than that by which these pacific peoples were lured and goaded into strife by the machinations of France, of Russia, and, above all, of Great Britain!

How comes it, then, that Austria was planning war against Serbia a year before the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand? That hidden and hideous fact; that black, premeditated crime, without excuse; that intended sacrifice of a small nation which dared to achieve freedom and maintain it against tyranny and force, was revealed to the world by Signor Giolitti in the Italian Parliament last December. In 1913, Signor Giolitti was Prime Minister of Italy. On the 13th of August of that year, the Marquis di San Giuliano, his Foreign Minister, telegraphed to him while he was absent from Rome that he had been informed by Austria of her intention to attack Serbia as a defensive precaution; that Austria had addressed a similar statement to Germany; and that she invoked the assistance of Italy under the terms of the Triple Alliance. What was Italy's answer?

"Both the Marquis di San Giuliano and I," said Signor Giolitti, "denied such an attack to be a *casus foederis,* and I told the Marquis di San Giuliano to tell Austria so in the most formal manner, and to urge Germany to dissuade her from a most dangerous adventure. This was done, and our Allies agreed with us."

No words can exaggerate the significance of this amazing disclosure. It should be ever present in the minds of students of the pre-war negotiations, because it converts much that would otherwise be inferential into matters of certainty. It explains the truculence of the Austrian Note to Serbia and the contemptuous indifference with which the Serbian reply was treated. It shows the nature of the "free hand" which Germany gave to Austria, and it dispels the mystery hanging over the alleged German efforts to soften the rigour of Austria's attitude. Indeed, at every turn and twist of the negotiations we find the traces of that resolve of Austria "to teach Serbia a lesson" which she had formulated in 1913, but had deferred to a more convenient opportunity, to that time more suited to Germany's purposes, when the Kiel Canal would be opened and a better pretext for war would be found. Certainly the incident accounts for the notices of mobilization to Austrian reservists oversea within forty-eight hours of the Archduke's death. It explains also why, in 1914, Italy declined to see in the action of Serbia such aggression as would entitle her Allies of the Triple Alliance to claim her support. She knew too much.

Finally, Signor Giolitti's disclosure dissipates once and for all the theory, so sedulously propagated, that Germany and Austria are injured innocents, dragged by the unscrupulous Entente into courses abhorrent to their Sunday-School doctrines and their

own unsophisticated pacifism. The plain truth is that Austria and Germany appealed to Europe under false pretences in 1914. Shamelessly cloaking the black purposes and designs of 1913, carried on to 1914, they succeeded in having the Powers negotiate in ignorance of them. Had England, France and Russia known what had been contemplated in 1913, there would have been shorter parleying with the German States. They would not have waited until July 25th to express their views; they would have had no illusions; there would have been no half measures. Sir Edward Grey knew nothing of Austria's proposal to Italy until Signor Giolitti revealed it. If he had known, it may be that when M. Sazonoff asked him to declare Britain's solidarity with Russia, he would not have refused. He certainly would not have asked Germany to plead with Austria. A stronger, firmer tone might perchance have dissuaded the Germanic Allies from war in 1914, as Italy's refusal had done a year before; though it is not a likely supposition, and has only to support it Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's hysterical surprise and agitation when he learned from Sir Edward Goschen that England would fight. However that may be, this is sure, that in July, 1914, Germany and Austria were determined on war; and war they have on terms and with results unexpected by them.

CHAPTER VIII

BRITISH POLICY, EUROPEAN AND COLONIAL

HAVING reviewed the various influences which have for many years been moulding German policy; having glanced at the events in Southeastern Europe which have made those smouldering causes flame into war; it remains to enquire briefly what course England had been pursuing throughout the last generation. Russia and France may be passed by for two reasons: because the justification of their action may be left to their own spokesmen, official and otherwise; also because Great Britain has been represented by the enemy as the villain of the piece. Treachery and perfidy are the least of the crimes of which she is accused in the Potsdam court of morals. The world is informed that she has long been planning a general war, with the viciously sordid intention of destroying a great commercial rival; of securing to herself beyond assault her vast territories, mostly acquired by fraud, and of which she makes no proper use. For this purpose, we are told, and with an army of two hundred thousand men, she seized the Serbian crisis as an excuse for waging war on the Continent of Europe against a nation with millions of trained soldiers and many great armies. Callous to the sufferings she would cause, she prodded Russia into mobilization, frightened France into action, and, for her own base ends, did not hesitate to lure helpless Belgium to destruction.

It is averred by the heroes of Aerschot, Dinant,

Malines and Louvain, who destroyed men, women and children non-combatants and mercilessly slew thirteen priests in one diocese alone,[1] that this stark outrage on mankind is only the climax of Great Britain's long career as pirate, highwayman and international bully. The pious framers of the policy of "frightfulness"; of organized official atrocity on a huge scale and with scientific precision and prearrangement; declare that Great Britain has not only been the main obstacle to the spread of a great saving *Kultur,* but had become the one permanent menace to the world's peace. The arraignment contains the painful revelation that there is no international immorality which she would not commit to gain her own ends. No doubt before the war is over, Germany will announce that Great Britain instigated the murder of Franz Ferdinand.

It is, however, true that in former days Germans of great authority admitted that England, with her maritime dominance, was a not unimportant factor in keeping the peace of the world; some even agreed quite benevolently that the Entente, by counterbalancing the Alliance, served the same end. All that is forgotten, or else is abandoned as false theory, refuted by the events of 1914. Now it is declared that the events of July and August, 1914, proved England's love of peace to be in keeping with the extent to which her sea power remained unmenaced; and that her adhesion to the Triple Entente was only a continuation of her old policy of getting someone else to fight her battles for her on the Continent, while she kept the shop open at home behind dark walls of water and steel.

In the study of events immediately preceding this

[1] See Pastoral letter of Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines and Primate of Belgium.

war it may be well to inquire briefly if there is any foundation for the charge that Britain has really been a menace to peace; and whether her steadfast policy has been a course of subterranean effort to stir up strife among the nations for her own advantage. The British are a fighting people. Were it not so they would not be where they are to-day. They are not, however, a martial race. In the past England has waged a few unnecessary wars, and some of them need justification. Speaking broadly, however, it may be said that since the passing of Mediævalism and its knight-errantry, her wars have not been of her own seeking. Sometimes she fought in pure self-defence, as in 1588; sometimes she was drawn into the great religious struggles that followed the Reformation, as under William III; more often she has lent her aid to maintain a political equilibrium in Europe — that balance of power whose overthrow, Germany's soldier philosopher says, is essential to the fulfilment of Germany's ambitions.

That England reaped advantage from such wars as these is undeniable; that from them she emerged a great World-Power is true; that she entered them in order to become a great World-Power cannot be sustained in argument or by the facts of history. As to some of the British Dominions, of course, no proof of innocence is necessary. They came to her, like Australia and New Zealand; like the East and West African Colonies; like twelve of the thirteen colonies which formed the original United States (New York being the exception), as the result of discovery or settlement, and by the same right as Spain held her American territories and Portugal holds her African possessions to-day; as Germany acquired Togoland, the Cameroons, New Guinea,

the Marshall Islands, and German East Africa and Southwest Africa.

At the close of the seventeenth century England was still, to all intents and purposes, merely a European Power. She had trading stations here and there, as in India; she had a few small settlements on the coast of America. She had not set herself to acquire over-sea dominions as had Spain and Portugal; her disputes with such Powers were mainly devoted to getting equal trading rights. Her army was small; her navy was strong, but not of overwhelming strength; and it was hard set to hold its own against the powerful fleets of Holland or France. Since the days of Drake, she had held aloof from military enterprises over sea. Then came a change. In the course of one hundred years of almost constant war, despite the loss of her American Colonies, she became the greatest Empire in the world. Yet, of all the wars in which she engaged during that time, only one — that of 1737 — had its motive cause outside the Continent of Europe, and that, curiously enough, was the only war in which England gained no territorial advantage. It is, perhaps, significant that this war, which was almost entirely commercial in its origin and object, is regarded as the least defensible of all, even by its own authors. The other struggles of that century had their origin in policies with which England was only indirectly concerned. The revolution of 1688 and the accession of William III drew her into the European vortex as an opponent of Louis XIV. Blenheim, Ramillies and Oudenarde gave her Gibraltar, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland; but they were not fought in order to secure a footing in the Mediterranean or at the mouth of the St. Lawrence.

In 1757 Austria and France, meditating an attack

upon Prussia, brought England into the field in aid of Frederick the Great when he was menaced with destruction. The noise of the Seven Years' War echoed through the whole world. Because Frederick's men were fighting in Central Europe for Silesia and to preserve the balance of power, "black men fought on the coast of Coromandel, and red men scalped each other by the great Lakes of North America." [2] Clive made England predominant in India, Wolfe made her mistress of North America by defeating France. The popular idea, however, that Canada was gained by conquest is entirely wrong. Of the seven Canadian Provinces only two — Nova Scotia and Quebec — were won in war. New Brunswick and Ontario were colonized by the United Empire Loyalists fleeing from the Revolution which made the United States; the Western Provinces were peacefully reclaimed from the wilderness. The French Islands in the West Indies were taken, only to be restored to France under the Treaty of Paris in 1763.

And here a word may be said as to the origin of the Indian Empire. War emerged after initial peaceful settlement and secured territory and control, but not war of England's seeking. Bombay fell to England as part of the dower which Catharine of Braganza brought to Charles II. As in the case of France, Holland and Portugal, it was trade which brought England to the East. Commerce, not conquest, was the aim of the East India Company. For more than a century its territorial possessions consisted of a few trading stations, and so they would have remained but for the ambitions of Dupleix and the fall of the Moguls. It needs only to remember

[2] Macaulay's Essay on "Frederick the Great."

what a mere handful of men won the battle of Plassy, and that they were led by a civilian clerk, to prove how little dreams of conquest animated England's pioneers in India. When Dupleix attempted to win India for France, England was driven to assert her interests; when later she became the dominant European factor in the peninsula, the chaotic politics and conditions of the native States led her ever onwards. Not all, perhaps, that has been done in India has been well done; but England at least is innocent of the charge that she entered that country with the design of conquering it by the sword.

Then came the Wars of the French Revolution. Again England was swept into the European vortex for no other reason than that her very existence was threatened by the ambitions of Napoleon. When the great struggle ended, she had again enlarged her Empire. Though she did not even then keep all she had won, she was securely established at Mauritius, at Ceylon and the Cape.

The manner in which the two latter dependencies came to her is an instructive illustration of the way in which the British Empire grew. They were Dutch Colonies, and Dutch Colonies they would have remained in 1815, had not Holland, by choice, or under compulsion, thrown in her lot with France. The Cape was a strategic position of the first importance to the holders of India. As such England naturally occupied it during the war; but when peace was made in 1805, she restored it to Holland, important as it was. Again Napoleon declared war, again Holland stood by him, again England occupied Cape Town; but this time she stayed there, although she actually paid £6,000,000 to Holland as compensation for the loss of her territory. In like manner Great Britain also restored to the Dutch the

island of Java, which she had occupied in 1811 — a possession of great possibilities. This in itself will help to show how little of ultimate design went to the creation of England's Colonial Empire or entered into her original calculations. It came to her not as the result of well-laid plans, but as spoils won in wars begun by other States for their own purposes; or from the necessity of protecting and organizing what her trader had accomplished, as has been the case with Germany in Samoa. England's colonies were, so to say, washed to her feet by the spreading ripples of great storms, in the unchaining of which she had little part. So little, indeed, did wanton territorial ambition colour England's policy, that she has more than once embarrassed herself by her apathy. Her want of enterprise in the Pacific, which led her to give Germany a footing in New Guinea and to acquiesce in the German annexation of Samoa, led to friction between Australia and the Mother Country. Her vacillation in South Africa, as when, against the wish of the Dutch inhabitants, she gave up the Orange River State and, later, the Transvaal, was the parent of many woes. In 1865 she seriously meditated handing over her West African possessions to the native inhabitants, and only desisted when she found them unfitted for independence. Indeed, through a considerable part of the nineteenth century, the Imperial idea languished, and colonies were regarded as a burden.

It would be difficult to point to any war deliberately promoted by England for territorial aggrandisement, such as those of Louis, or Frederick, or Napoleon; infinitely less for those internal reasons which have moulded the policy of Germany. This is beyond question true as regards British policy since the opening of the Napoleonic Wars. During the nineteenth

century, if we except the incident of Navarino, her only appearance on a European battlefield was in the Crimea. Whatever may have been the wisdom of that enterprise, England at least neither gained in territory nor in internal peace or stability by it; while it is certain that there would have been no war at all but for Russia's profound belief in the unwillingness of England to fight. So great was the general belief in the pacific nature of British policy that it actually precipitated the war. It is noteworthy that belief in British pacifism was not the least of the causes which induced the present struggle.

The second half of last century saw the further growth of pacifism in England; a sentiment which, on one occasion at least — when to an extent morally bound to help, she watched the dismemberment of Denmark — did her no credit at all. She developed a taste for arbitration, which many Englishmen distrusted and which seldom resulted to her advantage.

German statesmen revile arbitration because in their view it impedes the advancement of the stronger States with the great moral ideas like Germany; but England submitted to it with entire readiness in her dispute with Portugal over African territory and in her controversy with Russia over the North Sea incident. Take again the attitude of Great Britain during the American War of Secession, and measure it by the Teutonic standard. British sympathies were divided. Even the majority who believed in the Northern cause, were filled with admiration for the gallantry of the South. There was a strong party, with the then greatest English statesman at its head, which thought that the Confederate States would achieve their object. There were old antagonisms between the two countries. America was already beginning to prove herself a

formidable commercial rival. There was ground of complaint against the Government of Washington in the Mason and Slidell affair; our Consuls had been treated none too well; Mr. Seward's attitude was unfriendly and his diplomacy awkward and irritating. England might well have taken offence, and France would have been ready to coalesce. General Bernhardi regards it as an "unpardonable blunder from her point of view" that England did not seize the opportunity of assisting the seceding States to break up the Union; thus removing a formidable political and commercial rival from her path. That, apparently, is what Germany would have done; but what England did was to accept a by no means humble explanation, and to pay an enormous sum for damage inflicted by the *Alabama*.

There were other incidents of those fifty years, the treatment of which by successive British administrations led not a few — foreigners as well as Englishmen — to think that Great Britain was making too much of a gospel of turning her cheek to the smiter. Even the United States, it was said, whose pacific doctrines have been ever above question, had not tamely passed over the sinking of the *Maine* — provocation not a whit more serious than affronts to which Great Britain had more than once submitted. The one big war in which England engaged during this period was the result of handing back to the Boers, after the battle of Majuba, a Province which they had themselves voluntarily surrendered to Great Britain as a refuge from bankruptcy and the native menace. Because she had pushed pacifism too far, she had to use a quarter of a million men in 1900 to do what she might have done with a tenth part of the number twenty years before, had it been necessary.

Neither then, nor in her efforts to reduce arma-

ments since the beginning of this century, was Great Britain given credit for her peaceful endeavours. She did not, it was said, seek peace and ensue it for its own sake; she was still at heart the buccaneer, but had lost the daring which redeemed the buccaneer's faults. She had, indeed, lost her stomach for fighting, her old spirit had been corroded by soft living and sordid commercialism. War would dislocate trade and commerce; even if she were not mixed up in it she would suffer in her business. To the minds of the Camarilla, these were the true motives of British policy, conceal them as she might under a snuffling hypocrisy.

It is not necessary to argue these propositions, to claim for England any double endowment of original virtue, to assert that she is much better, or to admit that she is any worse, than other great nations. Whatever her motives may have been, the fact remains that the policy of England was a policy of peace.

Let us now consider the relations of Great Britain and Germany from the time when it became apparent that the great continental Power, chafing against the compression of her European position, had stepped into the wider arena of world politics. That epoch, as has been said, opened with the accession of William II, and the fall of Prince Bismarck; but its real activity did not begin until some six years later, when Germany began to show aggressive tendencies in the field of colonial expansion, concerning which Bismarck had said to Busch, his Boswell, "I want no colonies. They would only serve to provide places for certain persons." But the momentous date was the 27th of November, 1897, when Admiral von Tirpitz introduced his famous Navy Bill. In themselves the original proposals were not formidable.

Seven ships of the line and two large and seven small cruisers were to be constructed by the end of 1904. There were, however, attendant circumstances which made the enterprise significant. The Kaiser had sent his famous telegram to President Kruger only a few months before; while Prince Bülow informs us that about the time that Germany began to build her fleet, she established herself at Kiao Chou. A few months later she concluded the Shantung Treaty with China, which Prince Bülow regards as, "One of the most significant actions in modern German history," securing for Germany "a place in the sun in the Far East, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, which have a great future before them."

All this was, as the ex-Chancellor says, so "significant" that a few words upon it here will be in place. The German taxpayers, already supporting a huge army, were not passionately set on having a big navy as well. In 1896 the Reichstag had rejected proposals to increase the fleet. In order to carry Admiral von Tirpitz's bill it was necessary to "ginger-up" the German people. We are naïvely informed by Prince Bülow how it was done. The people were to be pointed to a new goal, a Manoa, a place in the sun; and there was to be some twisting of the British lion's tail; though this was to be done carefully to avoid arousing that animal's suspicions. So "with great trouble and after a long fight" the War Lords were "lucky enough to convince the commonalty of the usefulness and necessity of a positive colonial policy." Singularly enough this was achieved under the administration of Herr Dernburg who, to the American people, has denied with indignation that Germany "ever attempted to get a World-Empire," still less to get it by war or conquest.

In all this there is no suggestion that the new fleet was to hold such colonies as Germany already possessed, or to keep the sea-ways open for her commerce. The policy was positive, one of annexation and menace; and the menace was to Great Britain: the radiant places could only be got at her expense. German colonies could have nothing whatever to fear from France or Russia; yet, in 1900, only three years after the adoption of the Von Tirpitz programme, and before it was half completed, a new Navy Law was passed, by which the German navy would be well-nigh doubled. It was the Kaiser's reply to the Tsar's proposal for a limitation of armaments; and it was made at the moment when Britain was engaged in the South African War.

Those early years when the German navy was in swaddling clothes were full of grave anxieties for Prince Bülow. From the glimpse of them which he has allowed us, can be fairly accurately judged what the action of Germany would have been had she been in England's place. She would not have let herself be hoodwinked, nor would she have allowed the menace to grow unchecked. The moulders of German policy [3] regard it as a maxim that it is the moral duty of a State to its citizens to begin a war when its enemies force it to make warlike preparations which it cannot support; or when its rival seems likely to obtain a lead not easily to be overtaken. Had Germany been in England's place, she would have struck while her enemy's navy was weak. German statesmen must have thought England's failure to do so a blunder as great as her neglect of the opportunity to shatter the United States during the War of Secession.

[3] Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*, p. 53.

There were those in England who thought that such a course might be wise. They recalled how England had attacked the Danish fleet at Copenhagen as a precautionary measure, and they pointed out that the new menace was greater than the old. The Danish fleet at worst was only intended as a reinforcement of an enemy's power, and would not have been a reinforcement of overwhelming strength; but here was a navy growing to an extent wholly disproportionate to its overt purpose. A very modest fleet could have safeguarded German commerce and German colonies; in fact her commerce had advanced by leaps and bounds when she had practically no navy at all. No one coveted her possessions abroad. Indeed, it was after she had begun her programme of naval construction, that Great Britain and America had given her Samoa; while we had not thwarted her annexation of islands in Polynesia or the acquisition of territory in Africa. For all her purposes a fleet as strong as that of France would be sufficient. She wanted more, however; hers was a wider aim. For years Treitschke had preached to his students at Berlin that a colonial Empire and maritime dominance was the goal of Germanic development; and the then Crown Prince William and many notabilities of the Empire had thronged his lecture-room. The Kaiser did not forget the lessons of his earlier days. It was his ambition to grasp the trident which, as will be noticed, he holds well sheltered in harbour and not on the open sea.

Observers in England argued that such pretensions were incompatible, not only with the safety of the British Empire, but with the very existence of the United Kingdom itself. Deprived of her navy, Germany might lose her colonies, which were valueless, but she would still remain a great and powerful

Empire. Without her navy, the island home of the British Empire would be nothing more than a beleaguered fortress, doomed to surrender to any assailant after six months of misery, without a shot being fired. The British fleet was literally the bulwark and stay of every British citizen. If, as Germany now asserts, strategical necessity can excuse the violation of every code of honour, how much more might the law of self-preservation have justified the forcible limitation of Germany's naval preparations?

Strong as were these arguments, they did not suffice to overcome the old British doctrine of live and let live; they did not even convince a very strong section that there was any real or grave danger. Many, who admitted that Germany's naval policy exceeded the necessities of defence, held that she was entitled to her ambitions, and that it would be immoral to attempt to thwart them until they had blossomed into actual aggression. The main body of the pacifists denied that Germany had any ambitions or designs of aggression at all. True, the language of the Emperor smacked of ambition, but allowance must be made, they said, for the exuberance of a ruler in the raw vigour of life and not without a decorative sense and taste. The Navy League and Count Reventlow talked big, but they were driven to their verbal excesses by the pronounced peaceful instincts of the German people. Bernhardi was only a brilliant soldier, wrapped up in his profession, and therefore bellicose. As for the professors,— it was well known what professors are; always striving after some new thing, faddists evolving impossible theories; men who, like Benedict, must still be talking though nobody heeds them. The Germans were wise in all things, except in keeping so many soldiers and building so many ships; and, after all, that was

only because they did not possess a really democratic constitution. Once the people got control — it was to be observed how Socialism was growing! — the Krupps, the militarists and the professors would have to retire into seclusion. The best way of helping the innate pacifism of the Germans to assert itself would be to show we had no unworthy suspicion of them; and to set them a good example by cutting down our naval estimates; or, perhaps better still, by shutting down our arsenals and dockyards altogether. Pacifism could no further go.

Although this last wild proposal was confined to a few extremists, the idea of a reduction of naval expenditure received great support; it even became the avowed policy of the Liberal Party in England. Circumstances prevented the attainment of their design; but they steadily endeavoured to mould those circumstances to its attainment. That a good example might be set to other nations the Government even went so far as to reduce its own estimates.

CHAPTER IX

WHAT DID ENGLAND DO FOR PEACE?

WITH the accession of the Liberal Party to power in England at the end of 1905, the relations between Great Britain and Germany entered upon a new phase. Hitherto England had been content to go her own way, pursuing a policy of national defence, based upon a proportionate two-power preponderance of naval strength. This had long been accepted as the minimum of security; but it had become increasingly difficult to maintain with the growth of the German navy. With this great naval strength, however, England had sought to avoid giving or taking offence; she had, excepting in the Crimean War, steered clear of European conflict for a century. At the same time she had been much occupied in adjusting differences between other Powers; never attempting to base her own naval and military policy on abstractions, or to influence unduly the policy of other nations. Indeed, relying on her insular position, she had effectively abstained from international agreements.

When the Liberal Government took office they inherited a well-defined naval programme. Consistently with their former protests against "unproductive" expenditure on armaments, they resolved, and entered upon a policy of retrenchment; they sought to make arrangements with Germany which would enable them to combine economy with national security. Their first step was to present reduced Naval Estimates in March, 1906; but in the same

month Germany amended her Navy Law of 1900 — which itself doubled the Von Tirpitz programme of 1897 — by adding six large cruisers to her fleet.

A government less honest in its desire for peace might well have seen in this act a reason, perhaps an excuse, for abandoning professions which had well served their electoral purposes, but which also represented the long-sustained and expressed policy of their party. The Government of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, however, refused to be diverted from their pacific aims. Their reply to the increase of the German naval programme was, in July, 1906, to put forward amended Naval Estimates which reduced the March programme 25 per cent. in battleships, 33 per cent. in submarines, and 60 per cent. in ocean-going destroyers. Their professed reason for this bold step was declared to be the invitation of the Tsar to the Powers for another conference on the reduction of armaments. The failure of the previous conference gave little hope for the second; but, that nothing should be left undone to increase the chances of success, England resolved to prove her own sincerity; to give a lead to her neighbours and rivals by reducing her own rate of shipbuilding actually below what had been, by her First Lord of the Admiralty, represented as a fair margin of safety.

The step was sensational and apparently gallant, but it was not politics; and, as was prophesied by many critics, it proved futile and even dangerous to British interests. The policy failed completely. It became an error which Great Britain never quite repaired. So far from moving Germany to respond with a similar measure of curtailment, it gave her an opportunity to reduce the lead of England; and she seized it. The Kaiser refused to hear of disarma-

ment in any degree, or of anything that restricted the will and ambition of Germany. He thought the Conference nonsensical, and roundly declared that if disarmament was to be on its agenda Germany would stay outside. He was aiming at naval strength as an instrument of diplomacy, as a symbol of national strength, as a "big stick" to be used when "the Day" was come.

Nevertheless, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman would not yield without further effort. In an article in *The Nation,* early in 1907, he pleaded that a subject so urgent as the reduction of naval and military expenditure should not be excluded from the Conference; and that Great Britain would even make substantial reductions on her 1906 programme if others were willing to follow her. Within a month the answer came from Prince Bülow, that any discussion of such a subject would be unpractical "even if it should not involve risks." This declaration he emphasized in March, 1908, by an acceleration of the Kaiser's naval programme. This had the effect of increasing the German navy by four battleships in advance of the original programme. That was the cynical and challenging answer to the British Government's desire, free from ulterior motives, for a reduction of armaments; so lifting the burden of defence somewhat from the back of the worker in every country of Europe.

At this point England took alarm. Experts began to calculate how soon, at the then rate of progression, the German navy would become a really formidable and dangerous rival of the British. It was no longer a question of building against two Powers. It was a case of preserving a superiority over one Power, almost at England's very door. Other nations might exist and flourish without mari-

time power; in her position, with a vast mercantile marine which had to carry out her manufactures and bring back her food and raw material, it was life or death. Not looking forward to taking part in a war on the Continent, she had never sought to form a great standing army; but a navy of preponderating strength was imperative. Every man in the country knew this, as all our island people had accepted it over the generations in which England was free from naval warfare. In the light of the resolution made by Von Bülow in 1907, the whole policy of naval defence had to be reconsidered, the strategy remodelled, and the ships redisposed. There were no longer Channel Squadrons, Atlantic Squadrons, and Mediterranean and Home Fleets. The new disposition gave virtually one Fleet only, concentrated in the North Sea to meet the menace there. That policy was inevitable, and it has proved itself wise, as the events of this war have shown. Had it not been adopted, a German army would probably have been occupying England in the autumn of 1914.

There were three courses open to Great Britain when the danger became indubitably sure. She might have fought Germany there and then; or she might have met Germany's challenge by largely increasing her naval estimates. Again there were many who thought that if England had voted a navy loan of say, £100,000,000, and declared her determination to build eight, ten, or a dozen battleships a year, Germany might have given up a struggle in which the longer purse must inevitably win. But neither of these aggressive methods were adopted. England now tried to meet the trouble and lighten the grievous burden of taxation — as heavy for Germany as for herself — by direct negotiation for reduction of armaments with that country.

King Edward explored the difficult field in 1908, and, for once, his tactful diplomacy failed. The Kaiser was scornfully obdurate. He saw in the attempt at an understanding only that fear which showed a decline of character and patriotism in England. In 1909, Sir Edward Grey tried to reach an understanding between the two countries by suggesting that the naval attachés of the two countries should be allowed to observe the different stages of battleship construction. Again, far from urbanely, Germany refused. She was resolved to go her own way. None could dispute her right to do so; but it was a way which has led to a world-disaster; for it encouraged her to think that Great Britain was shorn of the character which had made her great; of the will and patriotism which had made her strong; that she was "the lath painted to look like iron"; and that she would neither stand by her friends nor sternly defend herself, if a crisis came.

She was mistaken, but she went on her way; building ships strenuously; creating situations in international diplomacy with a growing spirit of confidence and arrogance; trying her ever-growing strength by disturbing the chancelleries of Europe. She overestimated her success, however, and some suspicion of this fact seems to have entered the mind of the German Government about 1909, when it was found that the Triple Alliance was confronted by the Triple Entente. In 1904 all outstanding differences between France and England had been settled; three years later a similar reconciliation of interests had taken place between England and Russia, greatly to Germany's discomfiture. Great Britain, in harmony with those powerful States, was a different proposition from the Great Britain, separated from them by disputes in Asia, Africa, and America, shut up in

the splendid isolation of her island home. The German tone, thenceforward, became less emphatic. With the change of Chancellors, in 1909, came opportunity for a change of policy. The new policy was directed towards detaching Britain from the Triple Entente by suggestions of a naval agreement. It was Prince Bismarck's *do ut des* once more, and, indeed, German diplomacy never seems to move out of this rut of bribery, the amount of the bribe being in inverse ratio to the thing it buys. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's offer of July, 1909, was drawn on the same lines as his "infamous proposal" of July, 1914, and a similar base suggestion in 1912. In the latter, England was asked to stand by while Belgium was violated and France crushed, and as a reward was promised "friendly relations" with Germany, freedom from attack till another time undefined! In 1909, England was to enter into an agreement with Germany declaring, first, that neither country contemplated, nor would commit, any act of aggression on the other; again, that in the event of any attack upon either England or Germany by a third Power, or group of Powers, the one not attacked should remain neutral. The result of that arrangement would be to tie the hands of England and leave the hands of Germany free in any event. So long as Germany was bound to Austria by an offensive and defensive alliance, there was no necessity for her to take the initiative — Austria could do that for her; and still England would be bound by her bond. So, if Austria went to war with Russia, Germany was bound to assist her. But by the Franco-Russian agreement, France would be bound to attack Germany as soon as Russia was assailed by two enemies. By the suggested ingenious arrangement, therefore, England would be bound to neutrality by the aggres-

sion of France on Germany. Not only so, but the proposed agreement with Germany would debar her from protecting the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, or any other neutral State, if it were violated by Germany as the result of aggression by France. Great Britain would thus effectually debar herself from helping her friends in any circumstances; she would lose all claim to be regarded as their friend; she would have to sit quietly while those who might help her in her hour of need were destroyed; and she would have bartered away her honour for ever.

For all this, what was she to get? A reduction of the German navy, a promise that the German naval programme would be abandoned? No. The offer was that the rate of German shipbuilding would be retarded. The naval programme would have to be carried out in its entirety; and the number of ships to be completed in 1918 would have to remain as fixed by the Navy Law; but as a great concession, the number annually laid down in the earlier years would be reduced, with a corresponding increase in the last few years of the statutory period.

Not the most ardent pacifist could have blamed Great Britain had she refused to discuss proposals so one-sided, indeed so offensive to intelligence; so impossible of acceptance without betraying her friends, smirching her honour, and preparing for her own ultimate *débacle,* when with pride and "the soul possessed of sacrifice" vanished, Germany, having done her work elsewhere, would turn her attention to her hated rival in the North Sea. Yet England did not refuse to discuss even these proposals; for Germany had ever a way of looking at things which was not to be found in the code that gentlemen, and the nations they represent, set for themselves; and

this was taken into account. She did, indeed, decline to make an agreement which would bind her to neutrality under all conceivable circumstances; but she was willing to make a declaration that none of her agreements with other Powers had any designs hostile to Germany, and that she herself had no hostile intentions, and would cherish none. Her previous attitude towards Germany was sufficient guarantee of this declaration; but lest that should not be enough, she laboured strenuously to avert war between Russia and Austria over the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1911; and she commenced negotiations for the settlement of questions of mutual interest, such as the Bagdad railway. These were conducted to a final arrangement which conceded to Germany very substantial and much-coveted advantages.

Finally, England again approached Germany with a view to the settlement of the naval question, proposing a discussion on "temporary retardation" of shipbuilding. The reply to these later *parlementaires* is instructive. The German Chancellor promptly withdrew his former promise of a temporary retardation in certain circumstances, on the suddenly discovered ground that it was desirable to keep the shipbuilding industry well supplied with orders! As to the suggestion that the naval programme should not be increased, England was asked what she would give in return; but, before she could answer, the Kaiser abruptly ended the business by telling the British Ambassador that Germany would never bind herself to a stationary and fixed programme. A little later — on March 30th, 1911 — the German Chancellor made a speech in the Reichstag, in which he said that he considered any attempt to control shipbuilding by agreement was quite im-

practicable, and that any such attempt would lead to mutual distrust and perpetual friction.

Though Germany was unwilling to concede anything, however, she still tried to induce England to make a political agreement, desiring that it should be of the nature of a general political formula. Sir Edward Grey pointed out that such an agreement would be more comprehensive and intimate than any agreement, short of alliance, which England had with any other Power; and that it would, therefore, cause grave misunderstanding with France and Russia. Her arrangements with those countries were merely settlements of specific questions, and her friendship with France and Russia did not preclude friendly understandings with Germany. He added that he would gladly see some such arrangement attempted.[1]

In the summer of 1911 the Agadir incident broke in upon these leisurely and elusive conversations. It had the definite result of showing Germany that England would not stand idly by in the case of unprovoked aggression upon France.[2] There were, indeed, some British extremists who thought that we might have seized the opportunity of German intrusion into Moroccan affairs to settle the naval business once for all; but that would have had no substantial support in England. It is clear from what Prince Bülow says in *Imperial Germany* that Germany's motive then was entirely one of tentative aggression. At the time of the Algeciras Conference he had declared that the question of Morocco was really unimportant to Germany, since her trade amounted to less than £100,000 a year; in his book, however, he adopts another line. Though Germany did not get all she wanted out of the Conference, she

[1] Speech by Sir Edward Grey, March 13th, 1911.
[2] Speech by Mr. Lloyd George, Mansion House, July 21st, 1911.

did manage to assert her right to interfere in international matters, even when she had no interests at stake. In other words, the Kaiser was carrying out his ambition to allow nothing in the world to be done without German intervention! The ex-Chancellor, with an enviable gift for phrases, says that the Conference " provided a bell which we could ring " when necessity demanded.[3] In other words, Germany had to interfere in Morocco because William II had kindly promised to be the Protector of the three hundred millions of Mahommedans who are scattered over the world, and some earnest must be given of his qualifications for the post.

It was therefore held in some quarters of robust thought that to England had come a fortunate opportunity for smashing the German navy, by taking up a quarrel in which the help of France was certain. Undoubtedly it was a good opportunity, and she would have had not only France but expediency on her side; but instead of taking the chance, England, with higher purpose and deep desire for peace, laboured successfully to bring about a friendly settlement. Indeed, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg acknowledged the usefulness and sincerity of British efforts; he even expressed the pious belief that they had materially cleared the way for friendship between England and Germany — at the old price.

Accordingly, when the Emperor suggested that a member of the British Cabinet should go to Berlin to talk things over, our Government responded with alacrity. Lord Haldane, whose admiration and friendship for Germany made him especially suitable for the purpose, paid a visit to Berlin on the 2nd of February, 1912. But on January 31st, while

[3] Von Bülow, *Imperial Germany*, p. 100.

he was packing his bag in London, the Kaiser was opening the Reichstag and announcing a new Navy Law involving an increased expenditure of £13,000,000. It is, therefore, not surprising that when Lord Haldane was invited to discuss the terms of an agreement of amity between the two countries, he should reply by asking what was the good of making an agreement, if Germany went on increasing her fleet and forcing Great Britain to do the same. Thereupon came the old stereotyped answer: without a *political agreement* there could be no naval agreement, and there could be no naval agreement which involved reduction of expenditure. Retardation of building perhaps, but reduction, No.

Even that cheerless *pour-parler* did not deter England from making further efforts for an agreement. The British Government offered to sign the following declaration:

"The two Powers being naturally desirous of securing peace and friendship between them, England declares that she will neither make, nor join in, any unprovoked attack upon Germany. Aggression upon Germany is not, and forms no part of any treaty, understanding or combination to which England is now a party, nor will she become a party to anything that has such an object."

Still that was not enough for Germany. She held to her aim of dealing a fatal blow to any friendly understanding between England and her friends of the Entente; and she demanded a pledge of British neutrality in the event of Germany being at war. That pledge, for reasons already stated, England would not give; and so the negotiations failed once more.

England now made her last effort for accommodation and arrangement. In 1912 and 1913 Mr.

Churchill made his famous proposal for a naval holiday. If, in any year, Germany decided to relax her shipbuilding programme, England would do the same; by which device, as he put it, relief might be obtained "without negotiations, bargaining, or the slightest restriction upon the sovereign freedom of any Power." Germany, with a steadily growing disdain, made no response to the suggestion. Thereafter, each of the two nations pursued its own way.

"Yes," some reader may say, "but in all this you forget the essential part of England's policy that her navy should exceed that of Germany by a certain ratio. Why should she regard German shipbuilding as aggressive to herself, and Germany not take the same view of England's naval programme?" The question is natural, but the answer is not beset with difficulty. Without a powerful navy capable of resisting any attack England could not exist for a year if a powerful enemy decided otherwise. No one regards the large standing armies of the Continental Powers as more than essentially defensive precautions. England has a very small army; curiously enough, she has no real standing army at all. A vote of Parliament, or of one House of Parliament, in any one year could put an end to her army, since it has to be renewed annually. Being a purely naval Power, England could never attack Germany on land. If there was war between the two countries, without her navy she could not land a single man on German soil, or fire a shot against a German warship so long as the German fleet remained in harbour. On the other hand, without command of the sea she is open to invasion. Even with a great fleet, it is yet to be proved that she is immune from it.

This war, begun in 1914, was not the war against

England alone which Germany wanted. Her present rage, her passionate hatred of England is due to our taking a hand in a war from which we were to be excluded. Our "treachery" represents our refusal to let France be crushed, and Calais to become a German port.

Had England's ambitions been to acquire a larger Colonial Empire, she might, in the spirit Germany has shown, have acquired it at the expense of France in the days of quarrel with that nation, without fear of Germany making common cause against her. Had her object been to limit German expansion and restrict her to the position of a purely European Power, she would have interfered with her development in the Far East, in the Pacific, or in Africa; she would not have helped to give her a footing on the Congo; she would not have allowed the German navy to grow in the days when, as Prince Bülow puts it, Germany lay at her mercy like so much butter before the knife.

England would not grasp the knife; she was hopeful, not to say credulous, of German *bona fides*. She wished to believe that Germany did not seek dominion through war, but was a friend of peace. With the Agadir incident, however, Germany's policy was unmasked, and England sat up and saw with clearer eyes. Slowly, defiantly, Germany came into the open. Her publicists began to speak out bluntly and plainly; among them was Herr Maximilian Harden, Editor of *Die Zukunft*.

In 1912, at Christiania, on the morrow of the Agadir incident, he thus delivered himself in a speech.

"The German border will become too narrow for the people. It is the most stupid policy — and, therefore, of

course, the official policy — to say, 'We are the most peaceable people in the world and so we require the largest army in the world, and a reasonably proportionate navy.' Were it only a question of defending ourselves to an attack from outside, we should not need to expend all these millions in armaments. In order that Germany might become a Great Power, many nations had to bleed — Austria and France, for instance. For that reason alone it is necessary for Germany not to let her weapons rust."

It is unhappily true that Austria and France had to bleed that Germany might expand in Europe; and that she might expand in the larger world outside, Great Britain would have to bleed and yield up her possessions; for in no other quarter could colonies be secured which could receive large white populations. Yet all the time England kept the peace. Of all the Great Powers, Russia only excepted, Germany was the most immune against onslaught by England; without aggressive intentions, there was no country, as centuries of history show, with which she need have less cause for quarrel than with Great Britain.

Why, indeed, should Britain cherish hostile intentions against any nation? She is not the "weary Titan" which she had been called so often. The last few months show this at least; that she has lost nothing of the qualities by which she has climbed to greatness. She has, however, long felt that the era of growth had given place to the era of consolidation. That consolidation she sought to achieve by peaceful means. She would weld her Empire by giving the fullest freedom for each State in her Empire to develop on its own lines, and draw near by its own free will. Unlike Germany, her political genius required no stimulation by the shock of battle. It is indeed most true — and we are thankful for it — that the

Mother's danger has brought her children to her side with a spontaneous outpouring of love and loyalty such as the world has never seen; but we would not have welcomed war to be made secure of that. There were other ways of reaching the goal of Imperial consolidation. Since, however, the shock of battle has come, the genius of our race has drunk deep of a new loyalty, understanding and purpose; it has marched on. History may yet record the year 1914 as the real date of the brith of the British Empire; but it will have been made so by the unforeseen opportunity and accident which have been flung down from the skies of fate. The true foundations of Imperial solidarity were laid in peace, and in Peace England desired to build upon them. She was not permitted to do so, and she builds now in another way. War's prodigious activities place new constructive forces in her hands; shake loose from the shores of past caution powerful agencies; and she will now confidently adventure upon new-charted seas of closer union with her own in all the Seven Seas.

CHAPTER X

CASUS BELLI

IT is probable that since the beginning of things there has been no week in the history of the world more highly charged with the oncoming storm of great happenings than that which closed the month of July, 1914. So long as men of this epoch have memory, the negotiations which agitated those days will be studied and discussed, and historians of the future will explore them for light upon events which transformed the world. The negotiations cannot be studied by themselves. As was said in earlier pages, we must go far to find the hidden springs of the great tragedy which began with a murder, revolting the world, and engaging for the afflicted Hapsburg Emperor the sympathy of every people and every Government, including at least the Government of Serbia. That the Serbian regret was genuine there can be no doubt. Responsible Serbians had a natural repugnance for such a shameless deed, quickened by fear of its consequences. With the Friedjung forgeries and the Prochaska affair within memory, and recognizing that murder might remove a man but could not kill a system, their condemnation of Princip's hellish act could not lack in sincerity.

Through the foreign offices and Chancelleries of Europe ran a thrill of anxiety as well as of sympathy. The crust covering elemental forces in Southeastern Europe is very thin, and there were signs that it was giving way. A furious anti-Serbian pogrom broke out in Bosnia and Croatia. Houses

were demolished, there were fierce and bloody fights between opposing parties, and lives were lost. In Vienna mobs threatened the Serbian Legation, and, as in the case of the Archduke's murder, the police arrangements were so "entirely inadequate," that it seemed as though the Austrian Government were approving spectators of the disorderly excesses.

The Austrian Press used language of unbridled wrath, as was in great degree natural; but some papers at least deprecated pushing things too far. The *Neue Freie Presse* said that Austria should not pursue a policy of revenge; the *Neues Pester Journal* declared against making the murder of the Archduke the starting-point of a fresh period of friction between Austria and Serbia.

But strangely enough — and this is important — the German Press was more Austrian than the Austrians in its indignation. Within two days of the crime, while the facts remained obscure, when nothing was known except some reported confessions of the arrested criminals, the Conservative and Clerical journals of Germany were using language such as had not been heard since the Bosnian crisis. It was as though there had been no proposal on the part of Austria to make war on Serbia in 1913! The responsibility for the crime was at once fixed on Belgrade.[1]

It was announced that "Germanism must now make a definite stand." In short, as the Berlin correspondent of *The Times* telegraphed on the first of July, from reading the newspapers it might easily

[1] The German Government in its White Book seems to adopt the same attitude. Princip is described as a member of a band of *Serbian* conspirators. He was, in fact, a Bosnian, and all the persons put on trial seem to have been Austrian subjects, since the charge against them was one of treason.

have been imagined that war was certain. The statement was prophetic, though the writer himself refused to entertain the idea. This attitude of the inspired Press of Germany in the first phase of the crisis should be kept in mind when we come to analyse the policy of the German Government in its later fateful stages. It is wholly inconsistent with the later doctrine, that the question was one to be settled by Austria and Serbia alone.

In the diplomatic correspondence published by the various Governments there are no documents covering the first three weeks of July. It is, nevertheless, clear that they were weeks of grave anxiety to the world of diplomacy, not lessened by the fact that the disinterested States were powerless spectators. They knew that the worst might come. True, it was announced that the joint meeting of the Austro-Hungarian Cabinets on the 7th of July was only concerned with domestic measures to repress Pan-Serb propaganda in Bosnia; but the meeting was preceded by a conference of ministers with the Chief of the General Staff and of the Navy. Still, the next day, Count Tisza made a moderate speech in the Hungarian Parliament; three days later the Serbian Minister in Vienna was without apprehension; while, on the 22nd of July, the day before Austria sent her ultimatum, the Hungarian Premier declared in Parliament that the situation did not warrant serious apprehension or that untoward events were probable. Coming after his speech of the 16th, in which he deplored war as a sad *ultima ratio,* but adding that every nation should be ready to make war if it aspired to remain a nation,— as true of Serbia as of Austria — this was a reassuring declaration. Last, but not least, the Austrian Foreign Minister, in conference with the Italian Ambassador at Vienna, dep-

recated the suggestion that the situation was grave, but said that it ought to be cleared up. Indeed, the Russian Ambassador at Vienna, Count Schebeko, indulged in a holiday beginning about the 20th of July, and the President and Premier of France had gone to Russia a little while before. It was also satisfactory to learn of Germany's agreement with France and Russia, that the Serbian Government was not responsible for the murder of the Archduke, but that she ought to investigate the matters which led to it and put an end to anti-Austrian propaganda. Still more gratifying was the knowledge that Serbia professed readiness to do what she could and took in good part the advice of Sir Edward Grey to be moderate and conciliatory.[2] It was necessary to wait until Austria made her intentions known. They were, however, veiled in an obscurity as dense as that which covered the proceedings of the police investigation, or court martial, in progress at Serajevo.

So much for the activities of the Powers of the Entente. What was being done by the Powers of the Triple Alliance? We know that Italy was inactive, for her Allies kept her entirely in the dark; but we also know there was that being done at Berlin which had a profound influence on after events. Germany "permitted" Austria a free hand.[3] She did even more. She formed the opinion "that no civilized country possessed the right to stay the arm of Austria in this struggle." In view of what happened later, it is not too much to assume that she engaged to prevent such interference. In effect she accepted a blank bill to be drawn by Austria.

The German Foreign Minister denies that Germany participated in Austria's preparations or took

[2] Introduction to British White Paper.
[3] German White Book, p. 5.

any part in her decisions. There are grounds for rejecting this statement. There is every reason to believe that Herr von Tschirscky, the German Ambassador at Vienna, telegraphed the Austrian ultimatum to the Kaiser,[4] then ostentatiously cruising in the *Hohenzollern;* and that the document was altered by His Majesty. Subsequently some of its terms were made more exacting; but the time-limit was extended.[5]

It is also certain that the terms of the Note were known to certain Governments of the German Empire. On July 26th, Herr von Schoen, German Ambassador in Paris, was smilingly assuring the French Government that Germany had been ignorant of the text of the Austrian Note; but on the 23rd of July the Bavarian Prime Minister had informed M. Allizé, French Minister at Munich, that he knew the contents of the Note; and he based on that knowledge the view that it was one which Serbia would accept.[6] It is incredible that Bavaria should have known the terms of this document and the German Foreign Minister remained in ignorance. Germany had given the blank cheque and would have to honour it; and it is clear that Austria must have kept informed the Ally without whom she was powerless. Even were we to admit that Germany declined to know what was in the Note — on no other supposition could she have been ignorant of it — it makes her case worse; for this would go to show that she had resolved to fight and was really careless on what pretext war might begin. This theory, indeed, receives some confirmation from the fact that on the 27th of July Herr von Jagow told M. Jules Cam-

[4] British White Paper, No. 95.
[5] Dr. Dillon, *A Scrap of Paper.*
[6] French Yellow Book, Nos. 21 and 57.

bon that " he had not had time " to read the Serbian reply, which had been delivered to him that morning.[7] No time! What affairs should keep the German Foreign Minister from reading a brief document on which the issues of war depended, and for which Europe had been waiting with bated breath? No time? Or no desire? Is the world an ass?

On the 20th of July, Sir Edward Grey broke the ominous silence by asking Prince Lichnowsky if he knew what was going on in Vienna. The German Ambassador professed ignorance beyond the fact that Austria meant to take action, and adding that it would be a good thing if Russia would mediate with Serbia. This suggestion conflicts strangely with the view of Herr von Tschirscky, who was surprised that Serbian affairs should interest Russia;[8] and with Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg's opinion that Russia had nothing to do with the Austro-Serbian quarrel.[9] In fact, only the day after Prince Lichnowsky advocated Russian mediation the German Foreign Minister told Sir Horace Rumbold that there should be no outside interference; and he supported this attitude by refusing to approach the Austrian Government. The Governments of Europe were, however, not left long in ignorance of what Austria had decided to do. On July 23rd the curtain was raised. The Austrian Note was presented to Serbia.

When, on the same day, Count Albert Mensdorff, the Austrian Ambassador in London, informed Sir Edward Grey of the general tenor of the Note, the latter does not seem to have been much moved. The British attitude was one of detachment. It was admitted that Austria was under provocation, though

[7] French Yellow Book, No. 74.
[8] British White Paper, No. 94.
[9] *Ibid.*, No. 71.

the evidence on which she demanded satisfaction from Serbia was unknown. When it was disclosed it would be time enough to consider the question. So far as England was concerned, the immediate quarrel was between Austria and Serbia; and she had no wish to interest herself in it while it remained a local issue not affecting the general Near-Eastern question. Sir Edward Grey, therefore, told Count Mensdorff that he would express no opinions until he had seen the Note; and he would probably have to take a little time to consider it.

But when, in reply, he was informed that the time for consideration would be limited, he took alarm.[10] He agreed that the matter should not be allowed to drag on; and that if Serbia seemed dilatory a time-limit might have to be imposed, say, after a few days; but a time-limit should only be used in the last resort. If it were imposed now it would probably inflame Russian opinion, and defeat its own purpose of drawing from Serbia a satisfactory reply. He dwelt upon the "awful consequences" involved in the situation; he explained how not only the French and Russian Ambassadors, but others, had expressed their fears of what might happen, and how he had been asked to impress patience and moderation on Russia. The Austrian demands should therefore be moderate, and there should be time for inquiring into their justifications. Count Mensdorff agreed that the consequences might be grave, but added that all depended on Russia. Sir Edward Grey's reply is one steadily to be borne in mind. He said that in times like these, "It took two to keep the peace just as ordinarily it took two to make a quarrel."

Sir Edward Grey said this on the assumption that

[10] British White Paper, No. 3.

Austria wished Serbia to accept her demands and had no intention of provoking war. He did not realize what our Ambassador, at Vienna, realized on the 25th of July, that, "The surrender of Serbia is neither expected nor really desired." [11] He did not suspect that the Austrian Minister at Belgrade was even then preparing for his departure, nor that the Vienna mob would become frantic with delight when the Serbian reply was announced. He could not imagine that, even before the Serbian reply was handed to the Austrian Minister, Herr von Jagow would inform our Ambassador at Berlin that "The Austro-Hungarian Government wished to give the Serbians a lesson, and they meant to take military action." [12] He did not know that three weeks before that time Austria had issued notices calling reservists abroad to the colours, and that these notices were even then being received in South Africa.[13] Finally, with all his astuteness, he did not then grasp the fact that there was a Power behind Austria which desired war from the very first; [14] or that, when Austria and Russia had, at the eleventh hour, come to an accommodation for more time, and Austria had yielded to it in order to maintain peace, Germany would obdurately declare war.[15] Some of the illusions, however, must have been dispelled when he saw the text of the Austrian Note on July 24th. He described it as the most formidable document which he had ever seen presented by one State to another.[16]

It is interesting to observe here what Germany thought of the Note. On the 24th of July the Ger-

[11] British White Paper, No. 20.
[12] *Ibid.*, No. 18.
[13] Facsimile of this notice in Appendix. No. III.
[14] British White Paper, No. 141.
[15] *Ibid.*, No. 161.
[16] British White Paper, No. 5.

man Government informed Sir Edward Grey that it considered, "The procedure and demands of the Austro-Hungarian Government as equitable and moderate." [17] On the same day the German Foreign Minister admitted to Sir Horace Rumbold that, "The Serbian Government could not be expected to swallow certain of the Austrian demands"; and privately added that the Note left much to be desired as a diplomatic document.[18] This contradiction between Herr von Jagow's written and spoken word is typical of German diplomacy throughout the crisis. It finds a parallel in Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg's pledge to respect Belgian neutrality, given the day before Belgium was invaded; and in the broken promise of the Kaiser to the King and to the Prime Minister of Belgium that the neutrality of that country should never be violated.

On the July 24th diplomatic Europe was in a state of excitement akin to panic. The Austrian Note was indeed "formidable" beyond all expectation. It contained demands to which an unqualified assent was impossible. To accede to some of them it would be necessary to introduce legislation. It called upon Serbia to explain the utterances of Serbian officials, at home and abroad, after the Serajevo crime, without giving their names or reciting the words used by these officials. Lastly, it called upon Serbia to accept the collaboration of Austrian officials, which was, in effect, a proposal to abrogate Serbian independence.[19] The Note was presented

[17] *Ibid.*, No. 9.

[18] *Ibid.*, No. 18.

[19] Professor Delbrück, in the *Atlantic Monthly* for February, 1915, forgetting apparently what his official countrymen and other apologists have said, frankly declares that in his Ultimatum, Austria demanded "conditions which would have placed Serbia under her permanent control."

without indication of the nature of the proposed police inquiry. It would appear that its tone was designedly rude. When the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, at Vienna, suggested to Baron Macchio that it was not in accordance with international courtesy to submit grievances without giving time for them to be considered, the Baron replied that "One's interests sometimes exempted one from being courteous." [20] That is obviously true if one's interests lie in breeding a quarrel rather than in reaching accommodation. Finally, although forty-eight hours were given to Serbia in which to reply, not more than thirty hours were given to any other Powers for the consideration of the document, Germany alone exempted. It is even alleged that important telegrams were deliberately held back in the Austrian telegraph offices.[21]

It is important to understand what Sir Edward Grey did on this eventful twenty-fourth of July. He wired to Mr. Crackanthorpe at Belgrade, urging Serbia to give Austria satisfaction. He saw the French Ambassador in the morning and the German Ambassador in the afternoon. To both he said that the nature of the Austrian Note made him helpless to exercise any moderating influence on Russia, and that he thought the only chance of effective mediation lay in common action by Germany, France, Italy, and Great Britain. Such a step would enable Austria and Russia, even after both had mobilized and Austria had moved against Serbia, to hold their hands and await the result of negotiations. The co-operation of Germany, however, would be essential.

On the same day he received from Sir George Buchanan,[22] the British Ambassador at St. Peters-

[20] French Yellow Book, No. 45.
[21] Orange Book, No. 36.
[22] British White Paper, No. 6.

burg, a report of an important interview with M. Sazonoff, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. In that interview M. Sazonoff begged England to declare her solidarity with the other Powers of the Entente. He took the view that the extension of the time-limit was the first thing necessary; but he regarded Austria's attitude as designedly provocative. To bring her to a sense of the reality of the position, a statement by England that she would throw in her lot with France and Russia was essential. If war broke out England would inevitably be dragged in; by declaring her intention of going in, war might possibly be prevented. To this Sir George Buchanan replied that he did not think the British Government would take that step, and this reply was approved by Sir Edward Grey on the following day.

While all this was going on, the Prince Regent of Serbia had telegraphed to the Tsar, saying that Serbia would accede to the Austrian demands so far as they did not infringe Serbian independence, and asking His Majesty to interest himself in Serbia's fate. At the same time the Berlin Press was strongly supporting the aggressive line taken by Austria. The semi-official *Lokal-Anzeiger* was particularly violent, describing as fruitless any appeals which Serbia might make to St. Petersburg, Paris, Athens, or Bucharest, and saying that the German people would breathe freely when they learned that the situation in the Balkan Peninsula was to be cleared up at last.[23]

On July 25th, Sir Edward Grey was active in inducing the Powers to join in an effort for mediation. Without following the negotiations for joint action, hour by hour, their general course must be under-

[23] Orange Book, No. 7.

stood. From the first, Italy and France were favourable to the proposal; Russia offered to stand aside while mediation was in progress, though she doubted whether Sir Edward Grey's efforts would be successful. "The key of the situation," said M. Sazonoff, "was to be found in Berlin." [24]

He was right. Germany held the key, and she used it to lock the door against peace. Her policy was ambiguous, shifty, disingenuous, and ulterior. Prince Lichnowsky told Sir Edward Grey, on July 25th, that he thought Russia and Austria might be able with dignity to accept mediation, to which he was himself favourable. At the same moment Herr von Jagow was informing Sir Horace Rumbold that, if the relations between Austria and Russia became threatening, he was quite ready to fall in with the suggestion of mediation by the four Powers.

An important event occurred on the 26th: the German Emperor suddenly returned from his Norwegian cruise. It is said that the German Foreign Office regretted this step, taken by the Kaiser on his own initiative, fearing that it would cause inconvenient speculation, unrest, and excitement.[25] If it had had only that effect, it might be passed over. But it did more than cause speculation; it caused a change of policy. Within twenty-four hours Germany changed front respecting mediation. Prince Lichnowsky, being in London, was not in real touch with the political camarilla in Berlin. He informed Sir Edward Grey on July 27th — about eighteen hours after the Emperor's return — that the German Government accepted "in principle" mediation by the four Powers between Austria and Russia.[26] But Sir

[24] Orange Book, No. 43.
[25] British White Paper, No. 33.
[26] *Ibid.*, No. 46.

Edward Grey's telegram, containing this information to Sir Edward Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, crossed a telegram from the latter, telling him that Germany had declined the proposed Conference.[27]

Here, then, we find the German Government refusing on the morning of the 27th what it had accepted on the morning of the 26th, while the German Emperor had returned to Berlin in the interval. Not even then was Sir Edward Grey discouraged. He informed Germany that if she objected to anything in the proposed form of mediation, she was free to suggest an alternative.[28] If she thought a Conference, or a discussion, or even a conversation in London too formal, would she suggest any other means which would counter the risk of war? Mediation could come into operation by any means Germany thought possible if only she "would press the button in the interest of peace." That was not what Germany desired. Her delusion that Russia would not show fight was being dispelled; and her efforts were quickly directed to limiting the area of conflict.

It is clear that Germany was under the impression in the early part of July, and, indeed, until negotiations had gone far, that the Powers of the Triple Entente would not push matters to war; that they would give way before that last extremity was reached, as they had done in 1909 and in 1911. She believed that Russia would not fight.[29] On July 28th, Austria was convinced that Russia neither wanted war, nor was in a position to make war. On the 26th the German Ambassador at Vienna was

[27] *Ibid.*, No. 43.
[28] *Ibid.*, No. 84.
[29] *Ibid.*, No. 71.

convinced that Russia would stand aside while Austria chastised Serbia; and he also expressed the opinion that France was not at all in a condition to face a war.[30] As for Great Britain, the unbridled anger which her intervention has caused is the measure of German surprise and disappointment. It was, in fact, a cardinal point in Germany's policy that, in any event, England would stand aside. But there came at last a moment when it began to dawn upon Germany that she had made false reckoning; that neither Russia nor France was certain to climb down as each had done before; and that Great Britain's attitude was unexpectedly firm. On the July 29th, Sir Edward Grey gave Prince Lichnowsky a friendly hint that there were circumstances under which England might be compelled to take action. Certainly she would stand aside if Germany or France was not involved; but he did not wish to mislead him or his Government into thinking that under no conditions would England remain inactive.

When Germany realized that her plan had been based on an illusion, she altered it. She took the line that the Austro-Russian dispute was one to be settled entirely by those Powers. Then, none too cautiously, she made efforts to detach England and France from Russia,[31] and, failing this, she sought later to separate England from France; just as later still, when the war was not going to her liking, she again endeavoured to seduce France from England's side by affirming that she had no quarrel with the brave and gallant French who had been duped by England; in war-aphasia forgetting that France threw in her lot with Russia before England declared war. It was all tortuous, yet a sort of aboriginal

[30] British White Paper, No. 32.
[31] Orange Book, No. 35.

diplomacy, which took no account of human nature and racial character.

From the moment the Kaiser returned to Berlin on July 26th, Germany evidently made up her mind that Russia would fight if Serbia was to be crushed. Thenceforth, her energies were directed towards the isolation of that country, which once had been a hunting-ground for every needy German, and every carefully-chosen German spy; where once German influence had been so great that patriot Russians broke their hearts and ruined their cause in endeavouring to combat it and to govern Russia by Russians.

On no other theory is it possible to understand or explain the policy of Germany. If she was genuinely anxious to keep the peace, she knew it could be preserved by adopting Sir Edward Grey's proposal. She knew that Russia would stand aside; she knew that the Serbian reply would enable the mediators to adjust the quarrel. But she did not want the quarrel adjusted; she was resolved to mould South Eastern Europe to her own purposes. So she rejected the proposal which would in all probability ensure peace; and she cast upon two Powers the task which she would not entrust to four.

The net was cleverly woven, but it was clumsily spread. For while Germany kept pressing on France and England the duty of exercising influence on Russia, she steadily declined to exercise any influence on Austria. On July 22nd, she had refused to approach the Austrian Government respecting the nature of the demands she would address to Serbia; again, when Sir Edward Grey asked her to beg Austria to take a favourable view of the Serbian reply, she showed a curiously excessive caution for a peace-desiring Government. She agreed to for-

ward Sir Edward Grey's message, but the words of the German Under-Secretary of State are significant. The German Government considered that, "The fact of their making this communication to the Austro-Hungarian Government implies that they associate themselves to a *certain extent* with this hope. The German Government do not see their way to going beyond this." [32]

It is certain that Herr von Tschirscky did not misread the meaning of the message which he presented, and fluttered no dovecotes at Vienna. He told Sir Maurice de Bunsen that Serbia's reply was a sham, and that neither France nor Russia would fight. From end to end of the correspondence there is no sign that Germany ever tried to influence Austria towards a mood of complaisance. She was, however, very urgent that pressure should be put upon Russia; so ignoring Sir Edward Grey's dictum that it takes two to keep the peace as much as it takes two to make a quarrel.

But the clearest proof that Germany never desired a peaceful solution of the crisis will be found in the date on which she definitely refused Sir Edward Grey's invitation to mediate between Austria and Serbia. Up to a certain point, as has been shown, she appeared willing to join with the other Powers. On July 26th, she accepted the proposal in principle; on the 27th she rejected it altogether. In the interval two things had happened: the German Emperor had returned to Berlin and the Serbian reply had been made known. It is the latter event which now concerns us.

The Serbian reply was unexpectedly favourable; it went far beyond what any of the Powers, Ger-

[32] British White Paper, No. 34.

many not excepted, had thought probable. The Austrian Note had contained demands which even Germany admitted Serbia could not accept; but Serbia did accede to all except two, and even these she did not definitely reject. In regard to them she asked for further information — which was never given. She concluded her subdued answer in these words:

"If the Imperial and Royal Government are not satisfied with this reply, the Serbian Government, considering that it is not to the common interest to precipitate the solution of this question, are ready to accept a pacific understanding, either by referring this question to the decision of the International Tribunal of The Hague, or to the great Powers which took part in the drawing up of the declaration made by the Serbian Government on the 18th (31st) March, 1909."

It is hard to see what more Serbia could have done. She said in effect, "I am ready to do all you ask consistent with my independence. I do not desire quarrel or strife; and if anything in my reply is unsatisfactory let our friends decide what is fair and right between us."

Germany, the master of manœuvres, the drill-sergeant of Austria, objected to arbitration on the ground that it did not coincide with Austria's dignity to go to arbitration with a small State; as though that was not the object of arbitration — to ensure justice to States too weak to enforce it. There are numerous instances of arbitration between strong States and weak, as when England assented to arbitration with Portugal. Apart from that, however, the plea falls for this complete reason: in 1909 the Great Powers had intervened between Austria and Serbia, and Austria did not then object to arbitration. She was, therefore, debarred from making objection

when Serbia offered to submit the controversy to those same Powers in 1914. Germany had no compunctions, however. Precedent, history, law or fair-dealing did not weigh with her. Everything should bend to her own purposes.

It has also to be remembered that, on July 25th, the Austrian Government informed Sir Edward Grey that their Note was not an ultimatum, but a *démarche,* with a time-limit. This, in Sir Edward Grey's opinion, made "the immediate situation rather less acute." Naturally so; for, if the Austrian statement meant anything, it meant that the door was not finally closed upon negotiation. If, on the 25th, before Serbia's reply was received, the statement seemed to make the situation less strained, the position must have seemed infinitely easier after Serbia had sent her bravely submissive reply.

Yet that was the precise moment which Germany chose to reject the mediation which she had previously accepted "in principle." It comes to this: Germany carefully welcomed mediation so long as a recalcitrant reply was expected from Serbia; she rejected it as soon as Serbia's reply made the success of mediation certain.

The evidence is overwhelming that the fatal decision which has plunged the world into war was taken at Potsdam on the night of the July 26th. Each year since 1909 had been marked by portents of war: 1913 had seen Austria feeling for the friendly hand of Italy for an aggressive war on Serbia; but 1914 saw the war launched at last which was desired by Austria for one reason and by Germany for another; and by both to make South Eastern Europe Pan-Germanic.

CHAPTER XI

WAR

IN a survey of intricate negotiations in which time is measured, not by days, but by minutes, it is impossible to maintain a strictly chronological sequence without dislocating the narrative. In the preceding sketch of the general aims and actions of the contending Powers it was necessary to anticipate events. We must now turn back to July 26th, when the Cabinets of Europe were in possession of the Serbian reply.

On that day the Serbian Note was published in the newspapers of every capital except Berlin! Throughout Europe the Note had been read with a feeling of relief. Coupled with the announcement that Germany had accepted Sir Edward Grey's proposal in principle, it was felt that the crisis was passing. If the reply was as unsatisfactory as the German White Book describes it, why was it not made known to the German people by Wolff's Bureau, notoriously the servant of the Government and having a copy of the Note in its possession? The answer given by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin, that it was because "of the calming effect which it would have on German readers," [1] is the only one possible. In the circumstances, the people of Berlin, ignorant of the terms of the reply, demonstrated noisily in favour of Austria on July 26th, and even made hostile demonstrations before the

[1] Orange Book, No. 46.

Russian Embassy without being checked by the police.

This incident is noteworthy as indicating a new trend in the policy of Germany. Hitherto she had been content to give Austria a free hand and wait on events, confident that Serbia's reply would be unsatisfactory, and that trouble would come without her assistance. From the moment the Serbian reply was received, however, Germany abandoned her passive and expectant attitude for active measures to thwart the peacemakers.

The peacemakers also found that the reply of Serbia compelled a new direction to their efforts. Up to that point they had been employed to bringing Austria and Serbia together; thenceforward it was a question of bringing Austria and Russia together. The dispute was, indeed, assuming wider dimensions. Austria had declared that she had no territorial ambitions at the expense of Serbia; but suspicions as to the ingenuous nature of this declaration emerged. As mentioned in a previous chapter,[2] it was not impossible that Serbia might be compelled to cede territory to the Balkan States; while there was more than a suspicion that Austria intended to use the Serbian quarrel to make territorial acquisitions elsewhere. On July 25th, Sir Rennell Rodd reported from Rome that there was "reliable information that Austria intends to seize the Salonica railway."[3] Four days later, the British Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople informed Sir E. Grey that the designs of Austria might extend considerably beyond the Sanjak and a punitive occupation of Serbian territory. The Austrian Ambassador had spoken "of the deplorable economic situation of

[2] See chap. vii of this book.
[3] British White Paper, No. 19.

Salonica under Greek administration, and of the assistance on which an Austrian army could count from a Mussulman population discontented with Serbian rule." [4]

These were indications of Austrian designs which Russia could not ignore. Apart from them, however, she had a direct and profound interest in Serbia herself, recognized by Germany. It is true that in the course of the negotiations Germany's representatives pretended surprise that Russia should feel any concern in Serbia's affairs, but the German White Book shows how insincere were such expressions. Thus the White Book:

"We were perfectly aware that a possible warlike attitude of Austria-Hungary against Serbia might bring Russia upon the field." [5]

It well might. Russia had practically created Serbia; as a Slav Power the interests of the Slav nations were her concern. Even had the Russian government been indifferent to them, the Russian people would not have shared their unconcern. Just as Austria pleaded that the force of public opinion would have made the life of the Ministry not worth a moment's purchase had they hesitated to exact satisfaction; so the Russian Government could plead that Slav opinion would have swept them from power had they abandoned Serbian interests.

Therefore, from the moment Austria broke off diplomatic relations with Serbia, she found herself face to face with Russia. Had she consented to extend the time-limit at first, had she accepted the Serbian suggestion of arbitration, Russia would have remained inactive; but she refused. Upon that

[4] British White Paper, No. 82.
[5] German White Book, p. 4.

Russia said: "Since you will talk no longer with Serbia, perhaps you will now discuss the matter with me. If, however, you do not care to do that, I will step aside while you talk it over with mutual friends."

That offer Austria refused,[6] and declared war against Serbia on July 28th. The attitude of the German Government at this time was astonishing. On the 28th Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg told Sir Edward Goschen that he was trying to get Austria to discuss the matter with Russia; adding, however, his agreement with Austria's view that her quarrel with Serbia was entirely her own concern and that Russia had no standing in the business.[7] It is not probable that, holding such views, the German Chancellor's representations to Austria were more than languorous. They practically amounted to this: that Austria should proceed with the punitive expedition, but should inform Russia that it was undertaken merely to secure guarantees of good behaviour from Serbia, and that it had no territorial designs.[8] This, and this only, constituted those gigantic efforts to secure peace on which then and afterwards the German Chancellor laid such stress.

There came a moment when he took much credit for preaching moderation to Austria; but it is a significant fact that the world has never been given a glimpse of the despatches containing those admonitions. What actually did Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg say to Count von Berchtold? What was the latter's reply? If there are any despatches which embody such admonitions, let them be published, for they would be of great value to Germany

[6] British White Paper, No. 74.
[7] *Ibid.*, No. 71.
[8] *Ibid.*, No. 75.

in showing that, as is loudly asserted, she was the victim of foreign hatred and ambition.

On July 29th Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg acknowledged Sir Edward Grey's "efforts in the cause of general peace," but though he "appreciated," he did not emulate them. He allowed himself to be easily discouraged. On that same day he told our Ambassador that he found he had to be very careful about giving advice to Austria. He was of opinion that any pressure put upon her was likely to drive her to extremes. He was not sure that the mere fact of his forwarding, without comment, Sir Edward Grey's suggestion that the Serbian reply "offered a basis of discussion" had not precipitated the declaration of war.[9]

This is deeply interesting, and worth careful consideration. If Austria was so sensitive, how came it that before she dealt with Serbia she consulted Germany and obtained from her "a free hand"? If Germany was on such intimate, not to say paternal terms, as to give her a free hand, and to promise to stand by her, it is extraordinary that she could not take the liberty of advising her to be moderate and prudent, especially as her own interests were involved. The German White Book admits that Germany knew that she might be drawn into war by Austria's action. It was poor evasion, as so much German diplomacy has been. Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg's contentions might have some validity if Germany had stood aloof from the affair from the beginning; but it is merely ridiculous — and mendacious — in the face of what Germany had already done and known.

The German Chancellor feared that undue pres-

[9] British White Paper, No. 76.

sure might drive Austria to extremes. In the light of subsequent revelations this statement was unblushing hypocrisy. When he made it he knew that Austria was bent on going to extremes. He knew that she had proposed to attack Serbia in August, 1913, because Austria had told Germany so, and the Italian Government had remonstrated with him on the subject. Even the horse-marines would not be so credulous as to believe he did not know in June, 1914, that Austria was calling in her reservists from abroad; that she was making last preparations for the struggle which had been for years in contemplation.

We now come to a phase in the negotiations of vital importance. On July 29th Sir Edward Grey had an interview with Prince Lichnowsky,[10] to whom he showed a telegram from Rome in which the Marquis di San Giuliano, then Italian Foreign Secretary, put forward an important proposal. The Austrian Government had issued an official analysis of the Serbian reply, detailing the points in which it appeared unsatisfactory; the Italian Minister considered much of this criticism quite childish, but there was one passage which opened a way to a settlement. The Serbian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome said that if only Austria would explain the mode in which, under Clauses 5 and 6, Austrian agents were to intervene in Serbia, Serbia might accept the whole Austrian Note; and in the Austrian analysis it was stated that the co-operation of Austrian agents was for investigation only, not for judicial or administrative measures.

Here, then, was a clear opening for settlement. If Austria thought it beneath her dignity to give this explanation to Serbia, why should she not at once give

[10] British White Paper, No. 90.

it to the four Powers, who could then advise Serbia to accept without conditions? Sir Edward Grey drew the attention of Prince Lichnowsky to this. He said that as to mediation between Austria and Russia, it should not take the form of asking Russia to stand aside while Austria was left free to go as far as she liked. He agreed that Austria should not be humiliated; on the other hand Austria should not humiliate Russia; though, of course, there would be distinct humiliation of Serbia. He pointed out the danger of a general war, and again urged that the matter be referred to the four Powers, leaving it to Germany to suggest the form of the mediation.

There were thus two roads to peace: (1) Discussion between Austria and Russia; (2) reference to the four Powers. Russia, be it noted, was willing to accept either.

After Prince Lichnowsky had left him on the 29th, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed the substance of the interview and the proposal for mediation to the British Ambassador at Berlin. No doubt, in sending the despatch, he was hopeful that he was at last about to succeed; because the Italian message seemed to show a way out, and because Prince Lichnowsky had closed the interview by "saying emphatically that some means must be found of preserving the peace of Europe." In this telegram Sir Edward Grey used the words that —

"Mediation was ready to come into operation by any method that Germany thought possible, if only Germany would press the button in the interests of peace."

That telegram was sent about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of July 29th. The German response was prompt. Late that night the German Chancellor sent for the British Ambassador. Dr. von Beth-

mann-Hollweg had just come from Potsdam. Hot from an interview with his Imperial master, he at last drew aside the veil behind which German policy had been silently at work. Let Sir Edward Goschen tell the story of that fateful midnight interview: [11]

"I was asked to call upon the Chancellor to-night. His Excellency had just returned from Potsdam.

"He said that should Austria be attacked by Russia a European conflagration might, he feared, become inevitable, owing to Germany's obligations as Austria's ally, in spite of his continued efforts to maintain peace. He then proceeded to make the following strong bid for British neutrality. He said that it was clear, so far as he was able to judge the main principle which governed British policy, that Great Britain would never stand by and allow France to be crushed in any conflict there might be. That, however, was not the object at which Germany aimed. Provided that neutrality of Great Britain were certain, every assurance would be given to the British Government that the Imperial Government aimed at no territorial acquisitions at the expense of France should they prove victorious in any war that might ensue.

"I questioned His Excellency about the French colonies, and he said that he was unable to give a similar undertaking in that respect. As regards Holland, however, His Excellency said that, so long as Germany's adversaries respected the integrity and neutrality of the Netherlands, Germany was ready to give His Majesty's Government an assurance that she would do likewise. It depended upon the action of France what operations Germany might be forced to enter upon in Belgium, but when the war was over, Belgian integrity would be respected if she had not sided against Germany.

"His Excellency ended by saying that ever since he had been Chancellor the object of his policy had been, as you were aware, to bring about an understanding with England; he trusted that these assurances might form the basis of that understanding which he so much desired. He had in mind a general neutrality agreement between England and Ger-

[11] British White Paper, No. 85.

many, though it was of course at the present moment too early to discuss details, and an assurance of British neutrality in the conflict which the present crisis might possibly produce, would enable him to look forward to realization of his desire.

"In reply to his Excellency's inquiry how I thought this request would appeal to you, I said that I did not think it probable that at this stage of events you would care to bind yourself to any course of action, and that I was of opinion that you would desire to retain full liberty.

"Our conversation upon this subject having come to an end, I communicated the contents of your telegram of to-day to his Excellency, who expressed his best thanks to you."

Such was the proposal made by the German Chancellor within twelve hours of the declaration of his Ambassador in London that every effort should be made to preserve the peace of Europe; forty-eight hours after he had authorized Prince Lichnowsky to declare that Germany accepted mediation in principle; and twenty-four hours after he said that he was asking Austria to give the assurance against territorial aggrandizement which the Italian Government and Sir Edward Grey believed would clear the situation. Well might M. Sazonoff, the Russian Foreign Minister, declare on July 28th that he was sure Germany favoured Austria's uncompromising attitude, and had used no influence to modify it.[12]

It is not difficult to reconstruct the interview which had taken place between Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg and the Kaiser. While the Serbian crisis, and the complications between Austria and Russia, were holding the attention of the Cabinets of Europe, the talk of Kaiser and Chancellor was of war with France; of the creation of a World-Empire by the seizure of French Colonies; of "hacking their way through" Belgium regardless of all sacred obligations. It was

[12] British White Paper, No. 54.

not now a question of allowing Austria a free hand, or even of holding off Russia while she vindicated her rights against Serbia; it was a cold calculation of what Germany herself was going to make out of the trouble, and how she could make it with the minimum of danger.

Sir Edward Grey received the account of the interview about midnight on the 29th. The next day he telegraphed a peremptory refusal of the proffered bargain.[18]

"Your telegram of 29th July.

"His Majesty's Government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal that they should bind themselves to neutrality on such terms.

"What he asks us in effect is to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten, so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies.

"From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable, for France, without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power, and become subordinate to German policy.

"Altogether apart from that, it would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover.

"The Chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligation or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either."

The German offer has been described by Mr. Asquith as "infamous." It was not only infamous in itself, a worthy product of the "Poison Booth," as the German Foreign Office is called by its fa-

[18] British White Paper, No. 101.

miliars, but it was a dire affront to Great Britain. Perhaps it is not surprising that the authors of such a plot were beyond understanding that others might still have old-fashioned prejudices of honour and good conduct; but if they had had a little of the great Frederick's cunning or Bismarck's subtility, they would not have so brazenly proposed prostitution of a nation's honour to those unused to vicious practices. In the face of this, Germany calmly asked England to stand aside while the main obstacle to her own ruin was removed. Human impudence never swung freer of all anchors.

And for the loss of her security and her honour what was England to obtain? The rich rewards of *a friendly understanding with Germany!* The same suggestion had been made before during the discussions on the reduction of armaments. But there was a difference between the suggested bargain of those days and that of July, 1914. We were asked then to pledge ourselves to general neutrality that a temporary retardation of shipbuilding might be gained. We were now asked to barter away our interests and our honour for something, as to which, the Chancellor artlessly remarked, it was much too soon to discuss the details. We were to give all, for what? For a promise of something undefined; a promise given by men who, in the same breath, were proclaiming their contempt of promises and treaty engagements.

It is clear from the terms of his reply that Sir Edward Grey was, as every honourable man would be, indignant that such an offer should be made; but he did not allow his indignation as a man to blind him to his duty as a statesman seeking the way of peace. The natural man might well have said, " If you think it worth while to be friends with us, whom

by your offers you show you consider fools and knaves, we do not desire the friendship of men who affront us by such degrading proposals and who are capable of conceiving them." What the British statesman did say in effect was this: —

We cannot buy your friendship at the price of our honour and our interests, but we are ready to give our friendship as the price of European peace. If you want us to be your friends, help us to keep the peace; if we succeed in doing so, our mutual relations will be improved and strengthened.

But that was not all. Sir Edward Grey not only made an appeal of great dignity, but he gave a promise of which history will take note. Here it is in his own words: [14]

"And I will say this: If the peace of Europe can be preserved, and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavour will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it, as far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and, Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea has hitherto been too Utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has gone through for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the relief and reaction which will follow may make possible some more definite *rapprochement* between the Powers than has been possible hitherto."

So long as the accepted canons of right and wrong hold good, until they are supplanted by Nietzsche's *Law of the Superman* and Treitschke's inverted dogmas, that despatch of June 30th will stand as a model of national morality. In simple words, stripped of

[14] British White Paper, No. 101.

all diplomatic reservations, England offered as the price of peace now an arrangement which would guarantee the peace of Europe for years to come. No citizen of the British Empire can read those words without pride; seeing what has happened, few men of any nation can read them without emotion.

But when Sir Edward Goschen read them to the German Chancellor on the morning of July 31st they left him cold. He was, "So taken up with the news of the Russian measures on the frontier" that he received the communication without remark.[15] His mind, he said, was so full of grave matters that he could not be certain of remembering all its points. That was a curious comment. If the Chancellor was so overcome by the imminence of war, his sensitively alert and anxious mind might well have been seized with interest in a document which offered him the assurance of peace and amity. He could, however, in his agitation, well calculated to the moment, do no more than ask the British Ambassador to leave the despatch with him, so that he might think it over before giving his answer. Then, with Sir Edward Grey's despatch in his pocket, he went to see the Emperor at Potsdam. Thrice in the course of these negotiations do we hear of visits by the German Chancellor to the Emperor, and it should be noted that each visit was followed by a sinister development.

Time had been when William II had apparently used his influence for peace; but of late years acute observers had discerned a change. As the passions of his people rose against France, against Russia, against England, against all who seemed to stand in their path, the Emperor became less able, or less

[15] British White Paper, No. 109.

willing, to restrain violent sentiment. His apologists say that he wearied under the strain; less indulgent judges declare that he had brought the people to the place he had prepared for them; but there is no need to speculate. It is the fact that in 1913 King Albert of Belgium was convinced that his cousin of Germany was no longer a champion of peace. M. Jules Cambon, who, besides being a diplomatist, is a profound psychological observer, records his impressions in a despatch of overwhelming interest. He tells how during an interview with King Albert, the Emperor appeared overwrought and irritable, and adds that he is now less master of his impatience than in former years:

"As the years begin to weigh on William II, the family traditions, the retrograde feelings of the Court, and above all the impatience of soldiers, are gaining more ascendency over his mind. Perhaps he may feel I know not what kind of jealousy of the popularity acquired by his son, who flatters the passions of the Pan-Germans, and perhaps he may find that the position of the Empire is not commensurate with its power. . . . If I were allowed to draw conclusions, I would say that it would be wise to take into account the new fact that the Emperor is growing familiar with an order of ideas which formerly was repugnant to him." [16]

It is not hard to see the operation of this mental change in the Moroccan incident of 1911; in the military preparation of June, 1913; and in Austria's tentative proposals to Italy for an attack on Serbia in August of that same year. In the light of M. Cambon's analysis, one can understand the diplomatic change which followed the Kaiser's return from Norway, and how every meeting between him and his Chancellor weighted the balance against peace. In

[16] French Yellow Book, No. 6.

the interview which took place on July 31st the final decision was taken which plunged Europe into war.

With Sir Edward Grey's offer before them, the Emperor and the Chancellor sent an ultimatum to the Tsar, demanding the abandonment of mobilization against Austria as well as Germany, and requiring a reply within twelve hours. In order to understand this astonishing act, it is necessary to go back a few hours; to leave Berlin and turn to Vienna.

Germany had long resolved on war; the time had now come according to calculation. There were, as has been shown, internal disintegrating influences always at work in the Empire which could only be counteracted by external adventures. The German people had been induced to shoulder heavy taxation by alluring promises of colonial expansion. The limit of their tax-paying capacity was nearly reached; there were signs of reaction. Opportunity for war only was wanted, and that had come. Germany doubted the willingness of the Powers of the Entente to fight. Still more did she doubt their readiness to fight. They might talk big, but could they or would they translate their words into action? Germany had made up her mind to expose the pretence, to shatter the sham obstruction in her way, to meet make-believe with reality.

Austria's heart began to fail her, however, when she came to the sticking-point; when she saw the magnitude of the operations to be faced. She had not reasons of domestic policy like those of Germany to make war; on the contrary her domestic conditions rather impelled her towards peace. She did not even stand to make so much out of a successful war, as her ally. For her there were no colonies oversea, there was no mastery of Europe to achieve:

at the best she would only be "a brilliant second"; the utmost she might hope to gain was a port on the Ægean and perhaps a slice of Poland and Serbia, neither of them likely to add to her ease and comfort. To gain even so much she found before her a tremendous ordeal. When she received Germany's kind permission to deal with Serbia as she pleased, the business had not seemed formidable. She believed — Germany had encouraged her in the belief — that the other Powers would of desire or necessity stand aloof, while she had her will of the turbulent little State across the Danube. To issue a peremptory ultimatum, to shell Belgrade, to despatch a punitive expedition was no great thing. And then, suddenly, the figure of the Eastern Colossus loomed across her path, declaring that it would not be now as it was in 1909.

All at once a conviction of danger seized her; she shrank back,—

> "Like boys who unaware,
> Ranging the woods to start a hare,
> Come to the mouth of the dark lair
> Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
> Lies amidst bones and blood."

Perhaps the idea began to dawn upon her that she had been a catspaw, the blind tool of German ambitions. Whatever the cause, Austria began to abate her former austerity. She consented to enter into direct conversations with the Russian Government.

Foreign Ministers heaved a sigh of relief. Germany, with what sincerity events soon proved, posed for a few hours as the peacemaker of Europe, calling all men to witness the effect of her influence upon the bellicose Cabinet at Vienna. At Germany's request, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to St. Petersburg, hint-

ing that, pending negotiations, Russia might stay her preparations. The British Foreign Secretary told the German Government that, if any reasonable proposal were put forward which would make it clear that Germany and Austria were striving for peace, he would support it. He would indeed go so far as to say that if Russia and France would not accept it, England would have nothing more to do with the consequences.[17]

Russia, on her part, met Austria more than halfway. Wearied by his disappointed efforts for peace, M. Sazonoff eagerly seized the chance offered him. He promptly offered to stop military preparations, if Austria, recognizing that the Serbian question had become a matter of interest, would declare her readiness to eliminate from her ultimatum such points as violated the sovereign rights of Serbia.[18] He went further than this. On Sir Edward Grey's suggestion, he modified his formula. He offered to stay military preparations if Austria would allow the Great Powers to decide what satisfaction Serbia could give to Austria without impairing her independence or rights as a sovereign State.[19] These conditions Austria accepted. She agreed to submit the points which menaced Serbian independence to mediation. On July 31st she had, in fact, yielded on all the points in dispute.[20]

But the British Ambassador at Vienna noted that, as the relations between Austria and Russia improved, the tension between Germany and Russia increased. He does not conceal his belief that, throughout, Herr von Tschirscky, the German Am-

[17] British White Paper, No. 111.
[18] Orange Book, No. 60.
[19] *Ibid.*, No. 67.
[20] British White Paper, No. 161.

bassador at Vienna, had been the dark spirit of the play. His suspicions proved to be well founded. The German Emperor and his Chancellor knew that Austria and Russia had virtually reached an agreement; they had been told by Austria that, despite Russia's mobilization, in appreciation of England's efforts for peace, they were ready to accept Sir Edward Grey's proposal of mediation. They had before them Sir Edward Grey's despatches, one promising not to support France and Russia if they were unreasonable, the other offering to bring about a friendly arrangement between all the Powers, if Germany would but bring the present crisis to a peaceful issue. Knowing all this, on August 31st they sent Russia an ultimatum peculiarly domineering and offensive. Russia was ordered to demobilize, and was given twelve hours in which to reply. Lest that should not be enough, an ultimatum was also sent to France, which asked for a declaration of her intentions.

The hope of preserving peace had now almost reached the vanishing point. But on August 1st there still remained a chance — the last chance — and Sir Edward Grey tried hard to turn it to account. He telegraphed to Sir Edward Goschen saying that Austria and Russia had agreed on mediation, and that peace might still be preserved "if only a little respite in time can be obtained before any Great Power begins war.[21] The British Ambassador at once saw Herr von Jagow. He argued for a long time that the dispute was one between Austria and Russia, and that Germany was only drawn in as Austria's ally. If, then, the Powers most concerned were ready to reach a peaceful settlement, and Ger-

[21] British White Paper, No. 131.

many did not desire war on her own account, it was surely only logical that she should hold her hand and continue to work for peace.

The reply of the German Foreign Secretary merits particular attention. It was, he said, too late. Russia had mobilized and so had Germany. True, Russia had offered to suspend further action. But though she could wait, Germany could not. Germany had the speed and Russia had the numbers. Her safety lay in striking the first blow; therefore she would strike.[22]

It does not seem to have occurred to Herr von Jagow that, in view of the tentative arrangement between Austria and Russia, there was no occasion to strike at all. Once the dispute between Austria and Serbia was submitted to the Powers the necessity for war disappeared. The decision of the Powers would be binding on all parties, and as a matter of fact the question to be decided could be reduced to one point — the preservation of Serbian independence. There was not a State in Europe which did not agree, so long as Serbia was left her sovereign rights, that she should give satisfaction for the past and guarantees for the future. England had pledged herself to stand aloof if Russia and France were unreasonable; Russia had agreed that Serbia deserved punishment. There was, therefore, really no reason why there should not be an immediate demobilization all round.

If that idea did occur to the German Camarilla it was contemptuously dismissed. They had been steadily steering to this point for years. Much light has been thrown on the whole situation by the French Yellow Book in which M. Cambon, French Ambas-

[22] British White Paper, No. 138.

sador at Berlin, with insight and knowledge, lays bare the facts where German's relations to France were concerned. His observations at this point, as the war-curtain rings up, are of the most vital interest. So far back as 1911 the camarilla had even made the preliminary step towards mobilization, called *Kriegesgefahr,* and it was repeated again in April, 1913, while Herr von Jagow was making enquiries as to whether Russia had any difficulties in the Far East which might tie her hands in Europe.[23] Again, four months later, there had been those threatening and subterranean proceedings relative to Serbia exposed by Signor Giolitti in the Italian Chamber. On each of these occasions Germany had drawn back for military, naval, or financial reasons, but her retreat had exasperated German public opinion.

There was, indeed, as M. Cambon points out in his masterly review of German conditions, a Peace Party in Germany; and it is certain that the Southern States were not unanimous in their approval of military adventure. All pacific influences, however, were only a make-weight in political matters, "silent, social forces, passive and defenceless against a wave of warlike feeling," generated and fed by a strong War Party through varied and formidable agencies. Economists spoke of over-population and over-production, of markets and outlets; of being choked; of England and France blocking the way to oversea dominions. There was a "vague but deeply rooted conviction that a free Germany and a regenerated France were two historical facts mutually incompatible." Others resented the idea of talking on terms of equality with the country they had conquered in 1870.

[23] French Yellow Book, No. 5.

The country squires wanted " at all costs to escape the death-duties bound to come if peace continued "; to which indeed the Reichstag had agreed in principle. The aristocracy, menaced by the democratisation of Germany, believed that only by war could their " hierarchy with the King of Prussia as its supreme head " be perpetuated. The manufacturers of guns and armour plate, big merchants demanding bigger markets, bankers speculating on the coming of the golden age and the next war indemnity — all these regarded war as " good business."

The Universities swelled the martial chorus; sociological fanatics declared that armed peace was a crushing burden on the nation; and that as France stood in the way of disarmament she must be dealt with drastically, mercilessly, once for all. Historians, Professors, joined in the anthem to German *Kultur* and its mission for the redemption of the world.

Most dangerous of all — how truly has M. Cambon's estimate been verified! — were those who supported war through rancour and resentment: the diplomatists whose ineptitude had placed them " in very bad odour in public opinion "; who, worsted in negotiations, were " heaping together and reckoning up their grievances."

The time had come. M. Cambon had thought that, when it arrived, Germany would contrive, after Prussian tradition, to provoke France into aggression; but Herr von Jagow abandoned the Bismarckian diplomacy for the blunt methods of Frederick the Great. To Sir Edward Goschen he laid bare the whole scheme of planned aggression now bursting through all restraint. He was but echoing the words of General von Moltke, spoken fifteen months before:

"We must put on one side all commonplaces as to the responsibility of the aggressor. When war has become necessary it is essential to carry it on in such a way as to place all the chances in one's own favour. Success alone justifies war. Germany cannot and ought not to leave Russia time to mobilize, for she would then be obliged to maintain on her eastern front so large an army that she would be placed in a position of equality, if not of inferiority, to that of France. Accordingly, we must anticipate our principal adversary as soon as there are nine chances to one of going to war, and begin it without delay in order ruthlessly to crush all resistance." [24]

To anyone dispassionately reading the diplomatic correspondence it will appear that there was much more than one chance in nine of preserving peace when Austria made her agreement with Russia; that the chances were at least even between peace and war. But Germany did not look at it that way. For her the war was necessary. So General von Moltke is said to have declared to the King of the Belgians, in the presence of the Emperor, in November, 1913; and it was to be a fight to the finish.

"This time we must make an end of it," Moltke had said.[25] Germany had hardened her heart.

All the negotiations for peace had been a farce, and the farce was ended even before Herr von Jagow had declared to Sir Edward Goschen the *non possumus* which had only been hidden till the trigger of German mobilization was ready for the Kaiser's finger. The door of the Foreign Office had scarcely closed upon Sir Edward Goschen, after his last interview with Herr von Jagow, when Germany declared war upon Russia, and orders were given for the invasion of Luxemburg and the seizure of British ships at Hamburg.

[24] French Yellow Book, No. 3.
[25] *Ibid.*, No. 6.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLAND MOVES

IT has been shown in the preceding chapters how a dispute between Austria and Serbia developed into a dispute between Austria and Russia, as was inevitable. So long as the quarrel remained within those limits England was only concerned in trying to bring about an adjustment of differences and to keep the peace. Though there were difficulties in the way, they did not seem insurmountable. While Austria's attitude was immediately truculent, Germany's professions were at first apparently pacific. Russia had no desire to fight; she needed and wished for a period of tranquillity for internal development. France had no present quarrel with either Austria or Germany. Though she might be forced to fight in order to help her ally, she was doing all she could to promote a peaceful settlement. She was not ready for war; for cogent reasons she was averse to it. When he sat down to dinner on July 29th Sir Edward Grey could view the situation without despair, though not without anxiety.

At midnight the whole situation had changed. Sir Edward Grey was in possession of Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg's "infamous" proposal. We can imagine him in the silent hours before the dawn viewing with dismay the vistas of destruction which that proposal had opened up. The murder of the Archduke, the Austrian Note, the Serbian reply grew dim in the glare of the new menace. Even the antagonism of Austria and Russia suddenly became small beside the revelation of Germany's real designs.

She was no longer the friend of Austria, resolved to keep the ring while her ally exacted satisfaction for her wrongs; she was herself about to become the aggressor on her own account. In the light of Germany's protestations that Austria contemplated no territorial acquisitions in the Balkans, it was curious and significant that she herself now proclaimed the intention of grasping at a vast colonial Empire belonging to another country. If her plans did not miscarry, instead of France bound to us by the understanding of 1904, we were to have Germany, threatening, unfriendly and unscrupulous, as our neighbour in Indo-China, West Africa, and the Pacific. She was to dominate the Western Mediterranean from Morocco and Algiers, while she used Salonica as a base in the Eastern sea and pushed her railways to the Persian Gulf. What then became of our road to India; of the secure peace of our Eastern dependencies?

That France should be ravaged and her commerce destroyed was a hideous outlook; but in addition there was innocent Belgium, to whom we were pledged by every tie of interest, sentiment and honour, standing in the path of an enemy without faith or shame in international dealing. Having given her pledge to Belgian neutrality, would she keep it?

Behind all lay the question of the very existence of the British Empire itself. When Germany had accomplished the designs for which she had been preparing all these years, bringing them at last to the maturity "of the blond beast of prey" behind the screen of the Austro-Serbian negotiations, how long would it be before England's turn came? Sir Edward Grey must have felt like one wandering in a fog on some volcano, when the mists suddenly rise,

and he finds himself on the crater's edge with the devouring fires below him. He saw Europe, the world, as he had known it, dissolving in a cataclysm of universal war.

We have seen how he tried to meet the emergency, how great a bid he made for peace; how he strove, not even to the eleventh hour, but until the hands were pointing to the twelfth, to bring Russia and Austria to terms; and, indeed, how he succeeded, only to find all lost by Germany's declaration of war against Russia and her invasion of Luxemburg.

It was Sunday, the second of August. People in numberless churches of these islands were praying that there might be peace in their time, knowing as they prayed that the issue hung on a thread; fearing war, hating it, but conscious that there was something more precious even than peace — the Empire, with all it stands for, the honour of the nation, the faith of the thousand years. There was unusual movement in the streets. Anxious men watched tirelessly the tape machines in the clubs. They knew that the Cabinet was even then sitting to make the fateful decision. It was known also that in the Cabinet there were discords; the names of the dissentient Ministers were bandied from mouth to mouth. At last it was announced that the Cabinet had broken up, to meet again in the evening. The day passed, Monday came, and still England was at peace.

But the thread was now wearing very thin. After the Cabinet Council on Sunday morning, Sir Edward Grey gave M. Cambon, the French Ambassador in London, the following Memorandum:

"I am authorized to give an assurance that, if the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power.

This assurance is, of course, subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place." [1]

The Foreign Secretary was careful to explain the meaning of this to M. Cambon. The Government did not feel that they could, necessarily, bind themselves to declare war upon Germany in case of conflict between her and France; but they were prepared to give the above assurance, so that France might make her naval dispositions in the Mediterranean with the knowledge that her Northern and Western Coasts were safe from attack. This assurance was given as an obligation of honour. When Germany's shipbuilding policy had compelled England to recast her naval strategy and to concentrate her fleets in the North Sea, France had relieved British embarrassment by withdrawing ships from her Western and Northern Coasts, and concentrating her naval strength in the Mediterranean. England's duty was now clear. She could not be the ingrate.

The terms of Sir Edward Grey's assurance must be carefully considered as an indication of England's policy throughout the negotiations. While the negotiations were proceeding, it was Russia whom Germany accused of having been the cause of the war; it was Russia's premature mobilization which, according to Berlin, rendered futile every effort to restore the peace broken by herself. Once the war began, Germany changed her tune. Thenceforth it was England which brought about the tragedy; though her representatives in America have varied the charge according to the moment's necessity, now

[1] British White Paper, No. 148.

blaming Russia, now England. According to Berlin, England, true to her old robber instincts, sets Europe by the ears, that she may extend her dominions and make them more secure. She is "perfidious and treacherous"; by which is meant that she tricked poor, preoccupied, honest Germany into war; that she stood with her Allies when she was expected to forsake them, to flourish in peace while they agonized.[2]

This feeling has found frequent expression in German speeches and writings, but nowhere more vigorously than in the well-known Berlin weekly *Kladderadatsch.* Remembering that this paper holds in Germany the position which *Punch* does in England, the significance of the following lines will be appreciated:

"O Lord! I pray
By all I cherish
That the Briton Grey
Like Judas perish!
Let mine eyes see
Before I die
Grey in a hempen ring
Dangling from on high,
And as he swings
Let him descry
The German eagle
Wheeling in the sky."

The charge against England, therefore, contains two counts — that she urged her friends into war; that she deceived Germany into thinking that she was resolved to take no part in it. The first of these charges is met by the analysis of the correspondence which has occupied the preceding chapters. If any-

[2] For important official statement, published while this book goes to press, see Appendix No. IV.

one doubts the sincerity of England's efforts for peace, let him consider her position in relation to war, and compare it with that of Germany.

The war found Germany prepared to the last button. Within a few hours her troops were in Luxemburg, and were massed along the French and Russian frontiers, even if they had not actually crossed them. The authors of that remarkable book, *The Truth about Germany,* are enthusiastic in their pæans over the swiftness and smoothness of the German mobilization. Everything was ready; not so much as a grain of dust lurked in the bearings of the great machine. The War Minister in Berlin could, like Von Roon in 1870, lean back in his chair and thank heaven he could have a little repose. But how stood England during the month of July? Her fleet was ready, as it ever is, and it chanced that, by the accident of a royal inspection — which, from motives of economy, was to take the place of the usual Manœuvres — it was concentrated and of full strength. Yet the immediate part that the British fleet could play in a Continental war was very limited. It could, indeed, hold the seaways for British commerce and close them to the enemy; it could secure the food supply of the British Islands and guard them from attack. Having fulfilled these functions, however, it could do little more. The capture of German Colonies would not end the war, or have any influence upon it. As a weapon of offence it was powerless, so long as the enemy's fleet lay in its harbours protected by mines and submarines. Without daring to invade the precincts where even experts tread warily, it may be said that the war has revealed powers in submarine warfare hitherto almost unsuspected, save by a few. Enough was known or guessed, however, to show that a fleet, like Eng-

land's, compelled to be ever on patrol, might suffer proportionately more in a war of attrition than an enemy to whom the command of the sea was of secondary consideration. Certainly it would be so, if the enemy would not fight. This, indeed, was the view held in Germany. In his book, *The German Enigma,* M. Bourdon describes a conversation with Count Reventlow, who disbelieved in a naval war:

"England would be running too great risks. . . . She knows that she has countless vulnerable spots on the face of the globe, and that we have none. She knows that she could not starve us out."

Thus, England's command of the sea, though an important factor in a war, was not likely to be such a decisive factor as it was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was on land that the issue would be decided; and how far was England prepared to play a part in that deciding conflict? To speak truthfully, she was not prepared at all. There was an expeditionary force of which, it may be said without national bias, that in equipment, training and personnel it was the equal of any army in the world, ready to do anything that man may dare. Outside those 150,000 men, however — but the advance guard of a modern European army — what was there? There was a Reserve below its proper strength, though composed of well-trained men. There was a territorial army, short of officers, short of men, wanting in field equipment and inadequately trained. Its own talented author, regarding it with the indulgent pride of a parent, had always confessed that it would need six months' training to make it fit for service. Modern warfare, however, does not give six months, or six days, for training men. It does not come like a clumsy burglar fumbling at the

door, but like an athletic footpad, leaping from a hedge. England has, indeed, with amazing skill been able to improvise armies; but the prudent statesman never depends on an improvisation which when successful almost amounts to a miracle. Could any man, however much an optimist, have expected that political antagonisms, more fierce than any England has known since 1688, would be extinguished in a night and for the long day of war, by the sacrificing spirit of a great patriotism? The loyal aid of the Dominions was certain, though the degree of assistance could not be known; but who could have foreseen the splendid uprising of India?

Great Britain, then, had to depend on an army of, say, 200,000 men — forces designed to fulfil her bond to assist her ally and defend Belgium, should the latter's neutrality be infringed. It was a force all too small to give much effective aid even for that purpose, and hopelessly inadequate to the requirements of a European war. As events proved, even that small army was not able to reach Belgium in time to preserve her neutrality from violation. It might not even have been in time to check the tide of invasion from engulfing Paris but for the valour of the Belgian people — "*omnium fortissimi*," as one of the greatest soldiers of all time described them nineteen hundred years ago.

If the rulers of Great Britain, knowing all this, had deliberately planned and worked for war, they were not merely dishonest intriguers, they were mad. They were, however, neither mad nor dishonest. They made no secret of their intense desire for peace; but neither did they attempt to delude Germany into the idea that they would keep the peace at any price. So far back as July 24th, M. Sazonoff strongly urged Sir Edward Grey to declare England's solidarity

with Russia, and Sir Edward Grey declined. It may be, as was represented by the Russian Minister, that the publication of a formal alliance might have given Germany pause and prevented the catastrophe; but who can say? Though Sir Edward Grey rightly held that British opinion would not support such action in a quarrel then, in appearance at least, mainly Serbian, he did not conceal from Germany that circumstances might arise which would compel England to intervene. On July 27th he told the Austrian Ambassador that, in view of the European situation, the British fleet would not disperse that day, as had been intended.

On the 29th he spoke more definitely to Prince Lichnowsky. He told him he had something on his mind which he wished to say to him in a private and friendly manner. The situation was very grave. While it was confined to the issues then involved, Great Britain had no intention of interfering in it. If Germany and France became involved, however, all European interests might be drawn in, and then, as he added in relating this conversation: "I did not wish him to be misled by the friendly tone of our conversation — which I hoped would continue — into thinking that we should stand aside."

The German Ambassador asked him to be more explicit. Sir Edward Grey's reply deserves to be remembered. It was that so long as Germany, or even France were not involved there was no question of British interference; but if British interests required it, England would intervene, and intervene quickly. Again he said that he did not desire to be open to the reproach that Germany had been in any way misled as to the course England might pursue. Prince Lichnowsky thereupon said he understood it all perfectly and that Sir Edward Grey's statement

coincided with what he had himself given in Berlin as his view of the situation.[8]

Sir Edward Grey's declaration to Count Albert Mensdorff and Prince Lichnowsky had a profound effect on Vienna, as was to be seen from Austria's altered tone to Russia. If they did not convince the German Emperor and his Chancellor, that is their affair. If they deceived themselves, it is proof of their ineptitude not of British duplicity.

The engagement, therefore, which Sir Edward Grey gave to M. Cambon on the second of August was in entire conformity with the warning he had addressed to Prince Lichnowsky on July 29th. It was not, however, a definite pledge of alliance with France. It was conditional. If Germany kept her fleet at home, as she did from prudential motives in 1870, there was no obligation on Great Britain to fire a shot.

Something else happened, however, which compelled us to go to war. At the very moment that Sir Edward Grey was giving his friendly warning to Prince Lichnowsky, the German Chancellor was making his degrading proposal to Sir Edward Goschen. In that discussion the name of Belgium was used for the first time in the course of the negotiations. Sir Edward Grey lost no time in informing the German Government how he would regard an infraction of Belgian neutrality. On July 30th he said that England was not prepared to bargain away whatever obligation or interest she had in the neutrality of Belgium. On the 31st he invited France and Germany to state their intentions as to Belgium's neutrality; on August 1st he told Prince Lichnowsky that Germany's evasive reply was a mat-

[8] British White Paper, No. 89.

ter of very great regret, because the neutrality of Belgium affected feeling in Great Britain, which it would be hard to restrain were that neutrality violated.

Four times, therefore, once on the general question and thrice on the specific point of Belgian neutrality, did Sir Edward Grey warn Germany that British neutrality was not to be counted on in every circumstance. It would now seem that Germany did not believe him. That is her affair. Perhaps she thought that England, whatever her feelings, could not fight. If she did think so, if she preferred to believe Baron Kuhlmann rather than the British Foreign Secretary; that again is her affair. If she was misinformed, if she misjudged the situation and misread the British character, the responsibility lies on herself alone.

The Belgian question was in the end the swivel on which war swung. It was that which united the British people; which convinced the most pronounced Pacifists that war might have its sanctity, and that England was taking up arms in a righteous cause.

It is probable that, in the end, the obligation of friend to friend, and considerations of national safety would have drawn England into war as the ally of France, even if no Uhlan had ever crossed the Belgian frontier. But in such an event there would have been a strong party to declare that we were under no binding obligation; that the point of honour was indistinct; that our material interests were not so gravely threatened as to demand intervention; that those interests could be best safeguarded by standing aloof while others foolishly weakened themselves by war. Those who thought so would have been culpably wrong, but many would have held that opinion.

When Belgium was invaded, all those doubts vanished, or were held by a faction insignificant in numbers or influence. The moral sense of the nation was outraged. There were no longer questions of material interest — though indeed the neutrality of Belgium was of vital interest — the point of honour was no longer dim; the people recognized that, did they now fail to fulfil their obligations, they would lose their own self-respect and the respect of every upright man in every country. The obligation which our friendship imposed on us towards France was one to be construed by each man in his own heart and his own feelings; our obligation towards Belgium, however, was one defined, not by sentiment, but by the admitted code of private honour and by international law. If Germany chose to disregard international law and national honour; if she chose to measure British morality by her own; if she tore up the treaties of 1839 and 1870 in the belief that Great Britain, like herself, would regard them as "scraps of paper"; it ill becomes her now to complain of British treachery. Under what obligations had Germany placed Great Britain that she should describe as treachery to herself British loyalty to solemn engagements with Belgium? For let it be remembered that no engagement of alliance or neutrality with Germany or France would absolve England from her obligation to Belgium under the Treaties.

Who that was present will ever forget the scene in the House of Commons on August 3rd, when Sir Edward Grey raised the curtain which had hidden from the world's view the war negotiations and the tragic situation to which they had led. The House was thronged in every part; foreign Ambassadors looked down from their places; behind them the pub-

lic galleries were a bank of white faces, all bent with straining attention on the man who had held our destinies in his hand through anxious days, and was now telling the Parliament of England how he had played his part. He was standing, calm and impassive, at the table, a tall slight figure, his face, always pale, bearing traces of anxious toil. The Chamber was full of men who knew that in their hands now at last lay a task of supreme responsibility. Excitement was in every member's breast, but he ruled himself to quiet and control. Ministers were grave with foreknowledge and anxious as to the effect of the Foreign Minister's speech on their own party; but no agitation showed. The air was alive with great emotions, but the man on whom were turned the eyes of all the world seemed almost frigidly detached from the crisis in which he moved.

A Professor, lecturing on the economic policy of the Gracchi, could not have shown less emotion than did Sir Edward Grey as he sketched the history of our relations with France. He was not an advocate pleading a cause; he was a judge, impartial, passionless, severely exact, summing up a case. As he went on, the House, strained as its attention was, seemed to fall into his mood. Now and then there was a muttered "hear, hear," once or twice there was a burst of cheers; but they seemed almost irregular interruptions of a judicial pronouncement.

Speaking of the proposal that England should stand aside while Germany attacked France, he analysed our obligations with the quiet authority and scientific precision of a surgeon to his class in a clinic. He had his own deep feeling in the matter, but he would not intrude it. Let each man construe the point of honour for himself.

Next came the question of Belgium. He had said

no word yet in reprobation of Germany's now notorious and degrading proposal. In lucid words and with quiet authority he told of the Treaties, of Mr. Gladstone's action in 1870, of the promise of France to respect the neutrality of Belgium, of Germany's disquieting reticence, of King Albert's moving appeal. At last, however, it seemed as though he had to exercise great will to keep his feelings under control, while he showed that, if Belgium's neutrality was violated, her independence would be gone for ever, even if her territorial integrity was left untouched:

"If her independence goes, the independence of Holland will follow. I ask the House, from the point of view of British interests, to consider what may be at stake."

If France was beaten to her knees, if Belgium and then Holland and Denmark fell under Germanic influence, would there not then be against us an unmeasured aggrandizement of Germany, an incalculable menace?

Then, still in slow measured phrase, he considered what England should do. Should she accept the suggestion that by standing aside and husbanding her strength, she would be in better case to intervene and put things right, to adjust them to her point of view when the belligerents had fought themselves to exhaustion? He rejected the theory.

"If we run away from these obligations of honour and interest as regards the Belgian treaty, I doubt whether, whatever material force we might have at the end, it would be of very much value in face of the respect that we should have lost."

Reserved and controlled as was his delivery, the great Assembly thrilled at his words. But he went

on steadily and calmly, though with a new, searching, vital note in his voice, to show how, even in neutrality, England would suffer. Then came the climax in words which Abraham Lincoln, a master of the opportune phrase, might well have been proud to use:

"I do not believe for a moment that at the end of this war, even if we stood aside and remained aside, we should be in a position, a material position, to use our force decisively to undo what had happened in the course of the war . . . and I am quite sure that our moral position ——"

The end of that sentence was never heard. It was lost in the storm of pent-up emotion which swept the House. The effect was not the product of crafty rhetoric, it was no response to a well calculated appeal: it was the conscience of a nation speaking.

CHAPTER XIII

"BRAVE BELGIUM"

So England went to war, unanimous as she had never been since the days of the Armada; inspired as she had never been since Cromwellian times by the holiness of her cause. Her intervention, and still more the spirit which lay behind it, has been a factor of enormous moment; it will prove to be the decisive factor in the conflict. Germany pleaded military necessity, military advantage for the invasion of Belgium. Poor excuses at best, have they been proved valid by events? Would not Germany to-day be better off holding the narrow front from Belgium to Switzerland, and free to hurl her armies against Warsaw, than as she is, her navies impotent, her armies reduced to the defensive? The time may come, with better men at the helm, and in the better mood of a civilization which the Junkers of to-day do not understand, when Germany, lamenting the violation of Belgium, will exclaim, "I have slain a man to my wounding and a young man to my hurt."

It has been said that, in making war for the defence of Belgian neutrality, Great Britain was moved solely by self-interest; that she used the language of morality to cover and excuse her selfish policy. The charge is made in Germany. A nation that subordinates moral obligations to self-interest can hardly be expected to recognize morality in others. Naturally, upon this matter Germany finds an ally in Mr. Bernard Shaw. The writer who glories in reducing principles to terms of materialism, and can find the satis-

faction of his sardonic humour in the martyrdom of the early Christians, could of course not easily understand how self-interest may on occasion yield place to honour, for which men will give their lives. Mr. Shaw has earned the gratitude of Germany which at first bitterly assailed him, "because he was suspected of being a British patriot." Apparently, however, he has purged himself of this reproach by "expressions of a critical character relating to his country"; because the German *Vorwärts* of the nineteenth of February, 1915, declares that, "To-day this fellow without a country belongs to the Crown Witnesses of the entire German Press."

The charge requires an answer, and it is not far to seek. Both Mr. Gladstone in 1870, and Sir Edward Grey last August, referred to England's interest in the maintenance of Belgian neutrality as well as to her obligation of honour. Mr. Gladstone laid down two reasons for insisting on the execution of the Treaty of 1839 — the question of international morality, and "the common interest against the unmeasured aggrandizement of any Power." Sir Edward Grey used similar language in 1914, when he said:

> "I ask the House from the point of view of British interests to consider what may be at stake. If France were beaten to her knees, if Belgium, and then Holland and Denmark fell under Germanic influence, would there not then be against us an unmeasured aggrandizement of Germany, an incalculable menace."

From these sentences has been drawn a picture of England like another Mr. Pecksniff dismissing Tom Pinch, as a duty he owed to society.

The point has to be considered from two aspects: the origin of the Treaty of neutrality, and the motive which brought England into the war. The Treaty

of 1839 was, of course, not based upon pure altruism. The Great Powers guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium, not solely in her interest, but also in their own; and in the interests of Europe as well. When, in 1815, the Congress of Vienna made Belgium a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, it was with the idea of creating a State strong enough to keep the important harbours of the little kingdom from falling into the hands of any of the Great Powers. It was done to prevent any one Power from gaining an undue and dangerous advantage over her neighbours. It was locking their doors at night against each other. The revolt of Belgium against the Netherlands in 1830 involved a review of the whole situation. Belgium was beaten in her Civil War; but Europe decided, and rightly, that she should not be forced to retain a connection imposed upon her in 1815 for the general convenience of Europe, as much as for her own safety. Then came a difficulty. The severance of Holland and Belgium weakened both, and the original idea of a strong buffer State had to be abandoned. How then was the idea of a buffer State, on which all were resolved, to be maintained at all? Holland was in a position of comparative security through her geographical position, but Belgium had no such security; she was, so to speak, on the highway. For centuries she had been the battlefield of Europe, both because she was convenient for the purpose and because she was a desirable possession. Unless something was done, she would continue to the end of time to be an international prize-ring. Undoubtedly the misery of her situation affected the decision of the Powers to make her a neutral State in perpetuity, but the controlling reason was their resolve to make it impossible for any State — France then was most suspect — to possess itself

of Antwerp. Thus the neutrality of Belgium, like her union with Holland in 1815, had its origin, in part, in the self-interest of the Great Powers. It was, in fact, a repetition, in altered form, of the Convention of the 15th November, 1815, under which English and Prussian garrisons might occupy certain fortresses in the Netherlands in case of trouble with France. This itself was only a modification of the "Barrier Treaty" of 1715, which permitted Holland to occupy certain Belgian towns — Belgium then belonging to Austria — for security against a French attack.

When, therefore, Mr. Gladstone and Sir Edward Grey combined the menace of aggrandizement with the consideration of moral obligations, they were adhering with the closest loyalty to the principle of 1839, a principle which lies at the bottom of International Law. The guarantee of Belgian neutrality was individual as well as collective, differing in this respect from the case of Luxemburg, where the guarantee is collective; where the failure of one guarantor to fulfil his contract relieves the other guarantors of their obligation. In the case of Belgium the failure of one guarantor does not relieve the others; and this was arranged of set purpose, to prevent a guarantor from evading responsibility for action should any of the co-signatories violate the agreement. In no discussion of the violation of Belgian neutrality, therefore, could the question of individual interests be kept out of sight. The maintenance of those interests and opposition to repudiation of the guarantee were themselves obligations of honour.

The interests involved in the maintenance of Belgium's neutrality are both broad and narrow — narrow, as they affect the position of an individual nation, broad, as they affect the whole theory of the So-

ciety of Nations. Ever since Grotius enunciated his great theory — for the first time accepted by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 — there has developed a code of International Law for the ordering of international relations, which is the only thing standing between the world and anarchy. That Law rests on the doctrine that all independent civilized States are equal under it. These States may and must differ in degree of strength and development; but, like individuals in a community, they are all possessed of equal rights; hence an agreement made between a strong Power and a weak Power is as sacred as that made between States of equal strength. It is clear, however, that the sanctions of this law are not the same in the case of States as with individuals, for there is no supreme Power to enforce it. It depends upon the maintenance of international equilibrium, upon the Balance of Power; for it is obvious that if and when any one nation reaches an unchallengeable supremacy of power it is automatically freed from the sanctions of International Law. The individual may rise to the greatest heights of dignity and wealth, but there is always the State to punish him for wrongs done to his fellows. Not so with the supreme State; there is none to curb it, its only law is the law of its own making, as Treitschke (and Machiavelli before him) cheerfully maintains.

There are only two ways by which international anarchy or absolutism can be averted, both of them dependent on the maintenance of the Balance of Power. The first is that the whole of the world shall be parcelled out in equal shares between certain great Powers; the other is that the liberties and rights of small nations shall be respected and shall be protected against infraction by those interested in resist-

ing the aggressive State. The latter alternative is that which responds to every natural instinct of justice, and it is the one adopted by the leading jurists of every country. A high German authority, Geffcken, strongly insists on the impossibility of safeguarding international life where one State has supreme preponderance over all the others: [1] a calamity to be avoided by other nations being sufficiently strong to prevent it. He further holds that, since the absorption of small States must increase the chances of collision between the great States, the preservation of these small States should be one of the main factors in the true Balance of Power; always provided that the small States are fit and able to govern themselves. The modern Germanic doctrine, as has been abundantly shown in earlier pages, runs directly counter to these generally accepted ideas. It rests on the theory that only in Power does a State reach its highest morality; that weakness is a vice; and that the protection of weak States by such devices as arbitration is unscientific, since it opposes the doctrine of the survival of the fittest.

Many sins of course have been committed in the name of the Balance of Power, as many have been committed in the names of Liberty and Religion. It has been the pretext for aggressive war; it has been used to cover and excuse the annexation and partition of small States. In 1815 it was the reason for the union of Belgium with Holland; but it has also been the origin of wars which have preserved for Europe all the liberty she possesses — the Hundred Years War begun by Edward III; the Elizabethan War against Spain; the War of the Spanish Succession; the struggles of the eighteenth century; the Napo-

[1] Geffcken. Note in his edition of *Europaische Völkerrecht.*

leonic Wars. Singularly enough, in almost all of them, the possession of Belgium was a prime factor. Our historic co-operation with Belgium in the cause of liberty against tyranny is indisputable. For at Waterloo, Belgian forces were included in Wellington's army, in the iron determination to break for ever the power of a monarch bent upon world dominion. That was in 1815, and a hundred years afterwards we are breaking the ambitions of another Emperor who would wear the giant's robe of the universal ruler. Such revolts against limitless ambition are periodical. They are not simply material in their aim; they spring from something higher than envy or greed; they are incident to evolution. The German, Ranke, enunciates this truth in his *History of the Popes,* as follows: "When any principle or power, be it what it may, aims at unlimited supremacy in Europe, some vigorous resistance to it, having its origin in the deepest springs of human nature, invariably arises." The Emperor William would have done well to have read his Ranke with more humility and understanding.[2]

Undoubtedly it was England's interest to protect Belgium and maintain European equilibrium, as it was to Germany's interest to invade Belgium with the purpose of upsetting that equilibrium. The difference is this, that to maintain her interest Britain kept the faith; to advance her interests Germany broke her most solemn engagements. How far, then, does the German argument help the German

[2] Holzendorff in his *Handbook of International Law* describes the Treaty of London, which guaranteed Belgian neutrality, to be "a landmark of progress in the formation of a European polity," and adds that "nothing could make the situation of Europe more insecure than an egoistical repudiation by the great States of those duties of international fellowship." III; pp. 93, 109.

cause? That England was selfish in doing right would not justify Germany in being dishonourable.

But was England selfish? Was self-interest the dominant motive which brought her into the field? Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg has no doubt on the subject. Assuming the authority of a thought-reader, in the extraordinary document published in New York on the twenty-fifth of January, 1915, he declares that —

"England drew the sword only because she believed her own interests demanded it. Just for Belgian neutrality she would never have entered the war. That is what I meant when I told Sir Edward Goschen . . . that among the reasons which had impelled England into war, the Belgian neutrality treaty had for her only the value of a scrap of paper."

It must be said at once with regret that the German Chancellor is not a credible witness. As Sir Louis Mallet remarked of the German Ambassador at Constantinople, "Every statement he makes must be received with caution." He promised Belgium to respect her neutrality and broke his word; he made his famous speech of August 4th, 1914, to the Reichstag, and then tampered with it, because certain words gave the lie to excuses framed to justify the invasion of Belgium; and in this very interview he discredits his own reliability by falsely describing Yarmouth, Sheringham, Scarborough and Whitby, as "Towns equipped with arsenals, batteries and other military establishments." His account of the interview with Sir Edward Goschen is a gross perversion. Not one word did Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg say of British interests in that interview. It was British quixotry, not British selfishness, which he arraigned. That this is the correct reading of his complaint is

proved by Sir Edward Goschen's reply to the harangue. He did not attempt to defend his country from the accusation of self-interest, because it was never brought against it by the Chancellor. What Sir Edward Goschen said was this:

"In the same way as he and Herr von Jagow wished me to understand that for strategical reasons it was a matter of life and death to Germany to advance through Belgium and violate the latter's neutrality, so I would wish him to understand that it was, so to speak, a matter of life and death for the honour of Great Britain, that she should keep her solemn engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact simply had to be kept, or what confidence could anyone have in engagements given by Great Britain in the future."

That was the moment for the German Chancellor to have ridiculed this moral attitude. But he did nothing of the kind. He asked, "*But at what price will that compact have been kept?*" Sir Edward Goschen, in reply, said that, "Fear of consequences could hardly be regarded as an excuse for breaking solemn engagements." [3]

It is further important to observe that Sir Edward Goschen's account of his farewell interview agrees entirely with Great Britain's attitude throughout the pre-war negotiations. There were four particular occasions on which Sir Edward Grey warned Germany that British neutrality was not to be counted on in the event of war. On July 29th he gave a warning to Prince Lichnowsky in quite general terms to the effect that events might draw England in, though that would certainly not occur if neither Germany nor France were engaged.[4] On

[3] British White Book, No. 160.
[4] British White Paper, No. 89.

July 30th he made his answer to the "infamous proposal" which affected both France and Belgium.[5] On July 31st he asked France and Germany to state their intentions towards Belgium,[6] and on August 1st he told the German Ambassador that he very much regretted the reply of Germany to that request, "because the neutrality of Belgium affected feeling in this country." He added that if Germany would promise, as France had done, to respect Belgian neutrality, it would materially contribute to relieve anxiety and tension in Great Britain. On the other hand, were one combatant to violate Belgium while the other did not, it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in the country. He certainly could not pledge Great Britain to remain neutral, even if Belgian neutrality were respected; but the Government would be largely guided by public opinion, and public opinion would be greatly influenced by the neutrality of Belgium.[7] While Sir Edward Grey was using this language to Germany, he was informing France that, though Great Britain might — perhaps would — be drawn into war on her side, he could not give France any pledge of assistance.[8] Even so late as August 2nd he only gave a promise of help to France, contingent on certain naval activities of Germany, adding that,—

"The Government felt that they could not bind themselves to declare war upon Germany necessarily, if war broke out between France and Germany to-morrow."

On that occasion also he made a very striking statement. M. Cambon had asked him about the

[5] British White Paper, No. 101.
[6] *Ibid.*, No. 114.
[7] *Ibid.*, No. 123.
[8] *Ibid.*, No. 119.

neutrality of Luxemburg, and to this he assumed the attitude of Lord Derby and Lord Clarendon in 1870; but when questioned about Belgium, his answer was decisive and momentous:

"I said that was a much more important matter; we were considering what statement we would make in Parliament to-morrow — in effect, whether we should declare violation of Belgian neutrality to be a *casus belli*." [9]

Throughout the negotiations Sir Edward Grey was admirable in his consistency. He drew a sharp difference between England's obligation to France and her obligation to Belgium. The former was one of interest, yet he felt strongly the question of honour; for France had denuded her northern and eastern coasts of naval protection in pursuance of the policy of the Triple Entente; England's obligation to Belgium, however, was peremptorily one of honour, though, from the standpoint of British interests, the absorption of Belgium by any of the Great Powers could not be ignored. Furthermore, his despatches of July 29th and 30th reflect with remarkable accuracy the position of the nation at large. There was a considerable public which thought the Government over-cautious and dilatory in their attitude towards France; but there was also a section which regarded it from an opposite point of view. As events proved, however, all parties were united in the question of Belgium.

This is in the last degree significant. From the standpoint of material interests the maintenance of French power, which in 1875 both England and Russia had declared should not be crushed when Germany threatened it again, was more important in one

[9] British White Paper, No. 148.

sense than the maintenance of the neutrality of Belgium. The man in the street could argue that, even if Germany annexed Belgium — which she had sworn not to do — she would only acquire a single port and a short coastline, very annoying, no doubt, but not more formidable to England — perhaps not so formidable — as the occupation of the Pas de Calais and the Côtes du Nord. This also was to take no account of the complication and trouble which would follow the annexation by Germany of the French Colonies in Northern and Western Africa and Indo-China. From the material standpoint, therefore, the overthrow of France was in the common eye a graver danger than the infraction of Belgian neutrality — the lesser thing — which united the whole nation in a demand for war. Why was this? There is only one answer — because the invasion of Belgium by Germany established the moral standard of the war. It placed before the people, as nothing else could do, the question of right and wrong, of honour and dishonour, and bade them make their choice. They made it unhesitatingly,— even those who hated war most and held that even self-interest could never condone it — because they saw a moral wrong being done which sanctified war and made bloodshed righteous.

Never in all our long history did Minister more truly represent the feeling of the people than Mr. Asquith when he told the Parliament of Great Britain that war had been declared:

"If I am asked what we are fighting for I reply in two sentences. In the first place to fulfil an honourable obligation which, if it had been entered upon between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law but of honour, which

no self-respecting man could have repudiated. I say, secondly, we are fighting to vindicate the principle which, in these days when force, material force, sometimes seems to be the dominant influence and factor in the development of mankind, we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering Power. I do not believe any nation ever entered into a great controversy — and this is one of the greatest history will ever know — with a clearer conscience and stronger conviction that it is fighting not for aggression, not for the maintenance even of its own selfish interests, but that it is fighting in defence of principles, the maintenance of which are vital to the civilization of the world. With a full conviction, not only of the wisdom and justice, but of the obligations which lay upon us to challenge this great issue, we are entering into the struggle."

One more witness shall be called to show how our honourable obligation towards Belgium has always overborne the mere question of self-interest. Mr. Gladstone is accused of having mentioned the word "interest" in connection with Belgium, as has been already said; but Mr. Gladstone of all British statesmen was perhaps the most pronounced in his pacifism. Not seldom in his career did his deep love of peace sway his policy in a direction dangerous to British interests. But on the question of Belgium he used language not unworthy of Chatham; and this not from the point of British interest but the wider interests of civilization. In a letter to John Bright in 1870 he spoke of the violation of Belgian territory as something which would amount to an "Extinction of public right in Europe." He declared that England could not look on while, "The sacrifice of freedom and independence was in course of consummation." Also, speaking in the House of Commons, he used these words:

"We have an interest in the independence of Belgium which is wider than that which we may have in the literal operation of the guarantee. It is found in the answer to the question whether, in the circumstances of the case, this country, endowed as it is with influence and power, would quietly stand by and witness the perpetration of the direst crime that ever attainted the page of history, and thus become participators in the sin."

Such were the principles which in 1870 had guided Mr. Gladstone. They guided Sir Edward Grey in the negotiations in July, 1914; and he expounded them to the nation on the third of August of that year.

It was that speech and its reception which, in his own words, "excited and aroused" the German Chancellor. As Sir Edward Goschen described him in his account of the famous interview of August 4th, "He was excited, evidently overcome by the news of our action, and little disposed to hear reason." Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg now says (to the American newspaper) that what so discomposed him was "seeing the hopes and work of the whole period of my Chancellorship going for naught." It was not because Germany was at war with France and Russia that he was upset, because that was already a fact; but because he saw Great Britain entering the lists on their behalf. He bewailed the failure of his efforts to reach an understanding with England, to which the United States might later have been a partner. This, he declared, would have made a general war impossible and have guaranteed absolutely the peace of Europe.

By this statement alone may be gauged the credibility of the German Chancellor. The arrangement he wished with Great Britain would not have made war impossible, but would have made the victory of

Germany certain. As Mr. Asquith pointed out at Cardiff,[10] England offered to bind herself not to be party to any aggression against Germany; but she declined to pledge herself to be neutral in case of aggression by Germany. Will anyone, in face of what has occurred, believe that the peace of the world would have been assured by an arrangement which tied the hands of Great Britain and left Germany absolutely free to do her worst? It was the failure of that plan which shook the nerve of him who plotted it, which caused him such shocked surprise.

Opening a history of England well nigh at random, he might have read how England had fought, regardless of the cost, for the independence of Belgium and for the sanctity of treaties from 1338 to 1815. But even dismissing the wars of Edward III, of Elizabeth and of Anne as ancient history, as wars fought entirely for the maintenance of the Balance of Power, he need only have gone back a century and a quarter to find Pitt asserting the sanctity of international obligations. In 1792 France annexed the Austrian Netherlands and opened the Scheldt, in which Holland had a monopoly of navigation under the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. Horrified as she had been by the excesses of the French Revolution, England had stood by and had left France to work out her own salvation; but when the Netherlands was attacked she broke silence in words that Sir Edward Grey might have used in 1914:

"England will never consent that France shall arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure, and under the pretence of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the sole judge, the political system of Europe, established by

[10] Mr. Asquith, speech at Cardiff, October 2nd, 1914. See ch. ix of this book.

solemn treaties and guaranteed by the consent of all the Powers." [11]

For that principle she went to war with the Republic. Eleven years later Napoleon threatened the independence of Holland and Switzerland. The one was England's rival in commerce, in the latter she had no interest at all; but their independence and neutrality had been guaranteed by treaty; and Great Britain demanded that those treaties should be respected. Napoleon answered, like the present German Chancellor, "Holland and Switzerland are only trifles." Possibly they were, in comparison with Napoleon's Empire; but on behalf of those small nationalities England entered upon a war which lasted for nearly eleven years. Then, as now, she fought for a scrap of paper. Had the nickel Napoleon of Potsdam read wisely the history of his great prototype, his Chancellor might not have been so aghast with surprise in August last.

Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg may not be an historian, but he presumably knows something of the work of his own Foreign Office during the last half century. He knew the view England took of the Treaty of 1839 in 1870; how, at the instance of Mr. Gladstone, temporary treaties, reaffirming Belgian neutrality, were made between England and Germany on the one side and England and France on the other. Those treaties were remarkable in their nature. Under them England bound herself, if either belligerent violated Belgian neutrality, to co-operate with the other. She did not "count the cost"; she did not study on which side her advantage lay, she was ready to fight with France or with Germany on the one simple issue — the Treaty of 1839. If, with all

[11] *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. VIII, p. 304.

these things before him, the Chancellor still doubted the influence of honour on British policy, if to him her action was "unthinkable," he must blame his own ignorance or his own moral obliquity for the fatal mistake.

The weight of evidence goes to show that it was the morality of the Chancellor which was at fault. So little could he comprehend the attitude of Great Britain that he described her action as cowardly and treacherous, saying that, "It was like striking a man from behind while he was fighting for his life." It is quite true that Germany is fighting for her life. That is because she had not expected England to join Russia and France. On her own estimate she would not have been fighting for her life if the opponents of the new Dual Alliance had been only Russia and France. It is, therefore, treachery to prevent the bully from having his own way, by taking a hand in the game against him. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg might have reflected that, after all, the intention of the neutrality treaties of 1839 and 1870 was to provide a power to punish a nation which infringed them; and that Great Britain had thrice given notice of her resolve to enforce them.

But who was this statesman that he should talk of morality, coming hot-foot from the Tribune in the Reichstag where he had set forth his justification of the violation of Belgium's neutrality, admitting the wrong of it, but pleading necessity, as Germany had to hack her way through. That atrocious utterance has been most justly condemned by the world. It deprives its author of all claim to be a censor of other people's morals, but it has one merit: it is barefaced, and so far is preferable to many another apologia for Germany's action. To be sure the Chancellor does mar the perfect cynicism of his state-

ment by suggesting one excuse; and it is a falsehood. "France," he said, "stood ready for invasion." That is not true. When war was declared the whole of the French forces, in accordance with the plan of concentration, was disposed between Belgium and Belfort; thus confronting Germany, and nothing but Germany. The invasion of Belgium by Germany dislocated the French plans, and enforced a redistribution of her armies.[12] So unready was France to enter Belgium that she was unable to aid the Belgians; she was unable even to save her own fortresses, or to withstand the onslaught for weeks after Germany had invested Liége.

Let us for a moment turn to an incident at Brussels on August 3rd, the day before the Chancellor spoke in the Reichstag. At 1.30 A. M. Herr von Below awakened Baron van der Elst, the Belgian Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs, in order to tell him that a patrol of French cavalry and some French dirigibles had crossed the frontier. "Where did this happen?" asked the Baron. "In Germany," was the reply. The Belgian official naturally pointed out that in that case it was no concern of Belgium, and that he could not understand the object of the communication. Herr von Below's explanation was that the acts were of such a nature as to suggest that other acts contrary to international law would be perpetrated by France.

These unproved and apocryphal acts, in any case unconnected with Belgium — it was not even alleged that the dirigibles had flown over Belgian territory — were the sole basis of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's charge that France intended to invade Belgium. In any case, Germany's obvious duty was to

[12] French official reply to General Bernhardi, March 24th, 1915.

wait until French soldiers had crossed the Belgian frontier, and then to step forward as the champion of Belgium, calling on Great Britain to fulfil her obligations under the treaties of neutrality. Had that happened, it is as certain as anything can be that France, by her violation of neutrality, would have forfeited the support of Great Britain, and Germany would have arrayed the moral sense of the world upon her side. Germany did not take this obvious course, because she knew that France would not play into her hands; and that the military policy of France was framed upon the inviolability of Belgian neutrality, with the security it gave her on her north-eastern frontier. The German Chancellor concealed this knowledge under the words, "France could wait, but we could not wait," though later these phrases were dishonestly deleted from the report of his speech, because of their fatal significance. "France could wait." Of course. She had to wait for the slow mobilization of her army; but if delay was essential to her, what became of the argument that she was about to hurl troops into Belgium?

The German Chancellor accused Great Britain of "treachery" in maintaining the neutrality of Belgium; but let us consider for a moment Germany's "loyalty" in violating it? We need not repeat the story of the Treaty of 1839 or of the temporary Treaty of 1870; we can take up the tale in 1911, while Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg was Chancellor. In that year the question of Belgian neutrality was reopened. Discussing the fortification of Flushing, some Dutch newspapers had said that Germany would violate the neutrality of Belgium in case of a war with France. Thereupon the Belgian Foreign Office suggested that if the German Chancellor would take the opportunity of a debate on foreign policy to

make a reassuring statement in the Reichstag, it would calm public opinion in Belgium and tend to maintain friendly confidence. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg demurred to making a public statement, since it might induce France, secured on her north-eastern frontier, to concentrate her military efforts on the east; but he declared that, "Germany had no intention of violating Belgian neutrality."

Again, on April 29th, 1913, there was a discussion on foreign affairs in the German Reichstag, in which one of the Socialist members raised the question, observing that, in view of the growing danger of a Franco-German war, Belgium was afraid that Germany might infringe her neutrality. The German Foreign Minister replied that the neutrality of Belgium was established by international conventions, and that Germany "had decided to respect those conventions." This, however, did not satisfy the Socialist thirst for information, so Herr von Heeringen, the Minister for War, intervened, and said:

"Belgium has no part in justifying the German scheme of military reorganization; that justification is found in the eastern situation. Germany will not lose sight of the fact that Belgian neutrality is guaranteed by international conventions." [18]

We now come to July, 1914. On the 31st, when things were drifting towards war, the Belgian Government reminded Herr von Below, the German Minister at Brussels, of the conversations of 1911. He replied that he was well acquainted with them, "And that he was certain that the sentiments then expressed had not changed."

Three days later, on August 2nd, when war had already begun, the Belgian Foreign Minister en-

[18] Belgian Grey Book, Enclosure in No. 12.

countered Herr von Below and told him of the promise given by France to respect Belgian neutrality. The German Minister thanked him for the information, adding that up to the present he had had no instructions to make an official communication to the Belgian Government; but that "We knew his personal opinion respecting the security with which we had the right to regard our Eastern neighbours." [14] At seven o'clock in the evening of this very day that same Minister presented Germany's ultimatum to the Belgian Government!

Five days earlier — on July 29th — the German Chancellor had evaded the Belgian question when he made the "infamous proposal"; three days earlier Herr von Jagow had refused to give an answer on the subject without consulting the Emperor and the Chancellor, though he was doubtful if any answer at all would be given, as it might disclose Germany's military plans.[15]

Quite so. In order that Germany might safely weave her military schemes, which her Minister of War had declared took no account of Belgium, the Chancellor not only kept silence, but allowed, if he did not actually instruct, his representative at Brussels deliberately to deceive his intended victim by false assurances. He did the same thing in Luxemburg. There the German Minister, on July 31st, when asked by M. Eyschen for an undertaking that Germany would respect the neutrality of Luxemburg, replied, "That goes without saying, but the French Government must give the same engagement." [16] This the French Government did; but Germany in-

[14] Belgian Grey Book, No. 19.
[15] British White Paper, No. 122.
[16] French Yellow Book, No. 111.

vaded Luxemburg only a few hours after the Minister's soothing assurances. After that, the foresworn German Chancellor has the hardihood to talk of "treachery" and "stabs in the back." A burglar, extensive as his experience may be, is well advised if he be silent on the subject of jemmies and skeleton keys.

This reflection seems to have suggested itself to some friends of Germany since the war began. Perceiving that the Chancellor's sturdy repudiation of the sanctity of treaties has failed to commend itself to plain men, who hold that a promise is a promise and a contract a contract, these casuists have been at pains to prove that there was really no contract at all; and that the promise was, therefore, no longer binding. There is a fashion in these things. There will always be found ingenious writers to prove that Nero was the innocent victim of an artistic temperament; that Richard Crookback was really a man of commanding presence and fine honour, who smothered his nephew from high patriotic motives. "Let us only conquer," said Frederick the Great, when he violated the neutrality of Saxony in 1756; "the politicians will then find plenty of justification for us."

Since August last the politicians have been busy trying to save Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg from himself, with indifferent success. Their pleas are drawn upon lines familiar to the criminal courts. They plead not guilty first, because the Treaty of 1839 had lost its binding force; secondly, because, though still effective, it had been violated by France and England; thirdly, because though it may not have been violated by any one, Belgium refused to violate it in Germany's favour! It would be sufficient to point out that these arguments are mutually destruc-

tive; but it is necessary to deal with them, especially with the second, if only to show by their flimsiness how desperate is the case for Germany.

The first argument — that the Treaty of 1839 was no longer operative — may be dismissed in a very few words. It has been said that Prussia was absolved from her pledge when she entered the North German Union, as is proved by the fact that Great Britain was compelled to have France and Germany sign a second Treaty of Neutrality in 1870; and that the engagements of the North German Union did not bind the German Empire which, as a fact, has never guaranteed Belgian neutrality. There is no foundation for such ignorant statements. The temporary Treaty of 1870 explicitly stated that, on its expiration, "The independence and neutrality of Belgium will, so far as the high contracting parties are respectively concerned, continue to rest as heretofore on the first article of the Quintuple Treaty of the nineteenth of April, 1839."

In these words the North German Union took over Prussia's obligations towards Belgium and, as has been shown, the German Empire reaffirmed those obligations in 1911, also in 1913, and again last year. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg himself admitted it on August 4th, 1914, when he said that the action of Germany was "contrary to the dictates of international law."

It is perhaps significant that these attempts to palliate the invasion of Belgium are made by non-Germanic apologists. The German, less harassed by international rules, disdains such hair-splitting. He is content, like Herr Dernburg, to say that "treaties must not be overrated," that they must be disregarded in national emergency; or, like the Chancellor,

to regard them as paper spills to be used as pipe-lights by Necessity.

Let us for a moment take the place of the German Chancellor, imbued with his aspirations and confronted with a Treaty which made them unattainable, and ask ourselves what our duty would be in order to reconcile the advantage of our country with its treaty obligations. Obviously the honourable course was denunciation of the Treaty of 1839. Nations have often denounced treaties when they became inconvenient,— Great Britain has denounced treaties with Germany which conflicted with her duty towards her over-sea Dominions — and no taint of dishonour has remained. The Treaty of 1839 contained a provision for such an event. It was, therefore, open to Germany to announce that she withdrew from her position as a guarantor of Belgian neutrality. Of course she could not honourably have done so last July, because it is not permissible to pretend adherence to an agreement until the only moment when it becomes actively operative. Germany, however, never denounced the Treaty, not even at the eleventh hour; up to the last she professed her loyalty to it. By so much is her guilt the greater and the possibility of palliation the less.

The champions of Germany construct a second line of defence — that Germany was justified in invading Belgium, because Belgium had already infringed her neutrality. Now, Belgium could only have infringed her duties as a neutral before Germany crossed her frontier, because when that was done there was no neutrality to infringe. Belgium was bound by her obligations to her guarantors not to enter into any agreement which would be an infraction of her neutrality; and there is no evidence whatever to show

that she did so. Therefore, suggestions that there were "French officers in Liége and other Belgian fortresses after war had begun" falls to the ground. But in view of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's famous speech on August 4th, the question need not be argued. The Chancellor wanted then to make out the best case he could, and it would have been worth anything to him to have proved Belgium's infidelity. Neither then, nor in his communications with Belgium before the war, did he even suggest any breach of international right. His only attempt to justify the "wrong" was to charge France — not Belgium — with the intention of breaking neutrality. He had no complaint to make of Belgium's conduct. Belgium had, indeed, been scrupulous to avoid any cause of offence, however slight. On August 1st, the Belgian people were naturally nervous and excited. They saw themselves faced with grave danger. One newspaper, *Le Petit Bleu,* commented on the international situation in a tone friendly towards France, and immediately — on August 2nd — the Government seized every copy, on the ground that the tone of the paper was unneutral. On the previous day the Minister of the Interior ordered all local authorities to prohibit meetings intended to show sympathy or antipathy for any Power; and to stop all military cinematograph exhibitions. Thus, critically interested though they were, the Belgians were the only people in the world who were not allowed to express publicly any opinion on the war.

While the apologists of Germany were thus floundering between a cynical assertion of necessity which mankind rejected, and charges of infidelity against Belgium which they could not prove, happy chance provided them with an argument, of which they have made the most. Herr von Bethmann-

Hollweg displayed it sensationally in his famous interview with the representative of the Associated Press last January.[17]

"England ought really to cease harping on the theme of Belgian neutrality. Documents on the Anglo-Belgian military agreement which we have found in the meantime show plainly enough how England regarded this neutrality. As you know, we found in the archives of the Belgian Foreign Office papers which showed that in 1911 England was determined to throw troops into Belgium without her assent if war had then broken out — in other words, to do exactly the same thing for which, with all the pathos of virtuous indignation, she now reproaches Germany."

The first thing that strikes one in the Chancellor's statement is that it entirely refutes his own contention. In one sentence he tells us that England had determined in the event of war, to throw troops into Belgium "without her assent"; in another he says that England had made an "agreement" with Belgium to do so. How can these two statements be reconciled? If England was resolved to invade Belgium without Belgium's consent, would she have worked out a military plan of invasion with the Belgian War Office? If the Belgian War Office were parties to such a scheme, how can it be said that Belgium was to be invaded willy-nilly? If then, there was an agreement with Belgium, the Chancellor's parallel between England and Germany is nonsense.

The Chancellor cannot justly be blamed for incapacity to see how the above assertions contradict one another; that is his misfortune. But he must be condemned for the suppression of an all-important fact. On the margin of the document discovered in

[17] See London newspapers, January 26th, 1915.

Brussels appears this note, endorsed on it by the Belgian War Office:

"The entry of the English into Belgium would only take place after the violation of our neutrality by Germany." [18]

The importance of this marginal note is obvious. It shows that Great Britain had no intention of violating Belgian neutrality; and that any military intervention was contingent on Belgium having first been invaded by Germany; which is precisely the contingency provided for in the Treaty of 1839, to which Germany was a party. It was not by accident or design that the Chancellor omitted to mention this note. In the reproduction of the document in the German Press, the marginal note was not printed at all. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg boldly gives a gloss of his own making, when he says, "If war had then broken out." Poor argument this. It was not war which was to justify British intervention in Belgium, but the violation of her neutrality.

This marginal note does more than regulate British intervention; it explains in the clearest way the real nature of the document. It was not an agreement between the two countries, it was not even a record of diplomatic conversations; it was a record of purely technical discussions between General Ducarne of the Belgian War Office and Colonel Barnardiston, then Military Attaché to the British Legation in Brussels. So informal was it that no copy of it is filed at the British Foreign or War Offices.

These military discussions took place in 1906 and 1911. At both of these periods there was considerable friction between France and Germany respecting Morocco. As in 1870, and in 1914, the

[18] Sir Edward Grey's statement in reply to the German Chancellor, January 27th, 1915.

possibility of trouble between these nations recalled to Great Britain her obligations under the treaty of neutrality. In 1870 it drove Mr. Gladstone to consider the problem of landing 20,000 men on Belgian soil. In 1906 it impelled General Ducarne, Chief of the Belgian General Staff, to study, as was his duty, measures to enable Belgium, either alone or in conjunction with her guarantors, to resist violation of her neutrality. At the same time it induced Colonel Barnardiston to ask General Ducarne this natural question: "Is Belgium prepared to resist a German invasion?"

The answer was remarkable and significant. Belgium was sensitive, jealous of her honour, proud in her resolve to defend herself, punctilious in her desire to avoid any semblance of collusion. And, in this sense, General Ducarne replied to Colonel Barnardiston that Belgium was prepared to defend herself, at Liége against Germany, at Namur against France, at Antwerp against England! In speaking thus the Belgian Chief of the Staff was only putting into military terms the warnings which his Government had addressed to the Ambassadors of all the Powers; in which it declared its formal intention of compelling respect for Belgian neutrality by every means at its disposal. The same resolution was shown in the remark made by the Belgian Chief of Staff to Colonel Barnardiston,—"You could only land in our country with our consent." [19]

That having been made clear, General Ducarne explained the resources on which Belgium relied, if she was compelled to defend herself single-handed. And then, as was his right, and, indeed, his duty, he asked the British Military Attaché what steps Eng-

[19] Sir Edward Grey. Reply to Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, January 27th, 1915.

land was prepared to take to fulfil her treaty obligations should the neutrality of Belgium be infringed. Thereupon ensued those strategical discussions, afterwards embodied by General Ducarne in the Memorandum "discovered" in Brussels and now paraded as a corrupt agreement between Great Britain and Belgium.

What was done by General Ducarne and by Colonel Barnardiston is the course professionally followed by the General Staffs of every nation in the world. Plans of campaigns against all possible antagonists and under all possible conditions are worked out years ahead, pigeonholed, and revised from time to time to meet altered circumstances. Belgium, as has been shown, had made plans to resist invasion from Germany, France or England. Germany had made elaborate plans to invade France through Belgium, building strategical railways through sparsely populated country, and making military dispositions with that object in view. All that the Anglo-Belgian conversations meant was that each of the two nations could make their plans in full knowledge of what the other could do in an event especially provided for by Treaty. The Conversations involved no engagement between the two countries, and did not in any degree bind Great Britain to take action. Her only obligation was contained in the Quintuple Treaty.

A military arrangement, to take effect on the invasion of Belgium, was no infringement of obligations; on the contrary it was a course which Belgium and her guarantors were bound to take. Why did not Germany confer with Belgium as to the possibility of her neutrality being violated? She was bound to contemplate the possibility of that invasion. It was her duty, therefore, to do what England did. By her obligations to the guarantors Belgium was bound to

resist invasion, and they were bound to help her in such an event. Belgium was entitled to ask her guarantors what they were prepared to do; and they in turn were entitled to demand that she should be prepared to resist invasion. It was colossal effrontery of Germany to protest against military plans being formed for the maintenance of Belgium's neutrality, while she had been planning for years to invade it, either by force of arms or with Belgium's permission. Her strategical railways and her commercial exploitation of Belgium were means to that end.

What was the position? The neutrality of Belgium lay in no danger of violation save in the case of a Franco-German War. In such event the initiative would certainly lie with Germany; indeed Germany avowedly relied on the possession of the initiative for success, and she intended to use it. When Herr von Jagow and his Chancellor said last year, "Russia and France can afford to wait, but Germany cannot," they were only repeating what had been enforced in thousands of German military books. Therefore, Germany was sure to be the first to enter Belgium, if it was entered at all. As to the latter there was little doubt. So far back as 1875 the invasion of Belgium was contemplated by Germany. Writing to Sir Robert Morier, British Envoy at Munich, on March 27th, 1875, when a Franco-German war seemed imminent, Professor Geffcken said, "There is to be a great *coup*, and Belgium is the object. . . . He (Bismarck) is resolved to annihilate Belgium."

But more than this: the invasion of Belgium was no part of the strategy of France. Her numerical inferiority, an inferiority which her stationary population would accentuate every year, imposed on her the necessity of fighting on the narrowest possible

front as essential to her defensive policy. Thus she concentrated her efforts in making her eastern frontier impregnable, to the neglect of the Belgian marches. Had she entertained the design of attacking Germany through Belgium she would not have left the Trouée de Chimay; she would not have relied on fortresses like Maubeuge. Also, Belgium had this further guarantee for the loyalty of France — that, in 1870, when a violation of Belgian soil would have averted the disaster of Sedan, and might have enabled France to rally her armies for a fresh effort, she submitted to a humiliating catastrophe.

Germany, on the other hand, superior in numbers, relied on the aggressive, and therefore aimed at fighting on a broad front. As Von Jagow said to Sir Edward Goschen, it was a matter of life and death to get into France by the easiest and quickest way. To have tried to force the French frontier further south would have meant delay and heavy losses.

At last Belgium, suspicious, made her own plans to meet the most probable danger; and, England, suspicious also, made inquiries which she was bound to make if she was to be an effective guarantor; but there was no concerted action with Belgium, as the Belgian Minister in London has publicly declared. Preparation to resist violation of neutrality is a natural obligation on all concerned, and especially on the part of any guarantor who suspects the fidelity of any co-guarantor.

Lastly, as if conscious that all these ingenious apologies for Germany must fail, her champions fall back on a plea that might well bring a blush to the cheek of an honest man. "After all," they say, "Belgium has only herself to thank for what has befallen her. If she had not listened to England, if she had allowed Germany to march through Belgium, she

would have suffered nothing; indeed she would have been money in pocket. She could have been merchant, broker, and contractor for Germany."

What a light is thrown on German political morality by such an argument gravely advanced by philosophers, economists, scientists, historians, statesmen, merchants, even theologians! It is as though a man, on trial for killing a policeman, were to say, "It was the silly fool's own fault. If he had only let me rob the shop, he would have been all right; he might even have had a bit of the swag."

That is almost literally the position. Belgium was bound to be true to her own neutrality. It had been declared not in her own interest alone, but in the interests of Europe. For the sake of that she had enjoyed three-quarters of a century of peace, to which her land had long been a stranger. In return for that benefit, her duty demanded that she should give to no State an advantage which might injure others. Had she regarded her obligation as a scrap of paper, she might have saved herself much sacrifice; but she would have betrayed her trust, and her name would have been a byword among the nations.

The temptation to yield to Germany's demand for a free passage was not slight. The Flemings were of Teutonic blood; the Walloons were offended by the policy of France towards the Church to which they were passionately attached; throughout the country was a strong Socialist Party with a leaning towards anti-militarism. Great Britain, by her criticism of Congo administration, had lost some of her former popularity. The people had become addicted to the arts of peace; they knew by old tradition how terrible war could be, though they were still unconscious of the depths of infamy which it could reach. By submission they could purchase tran-

quillity and they could make large gains. They were promised that their territorial integrity and independence should be respected, and that they should get generous compensation for any injury they might sustain.

And they refused. They refused it before war began, and they refused it twice after it began. They did not balance; they did their duty; they kept the faith. The words of the Belgian reply will ring in the aisles of Time until there is no more Time at all:

"Belgium has always remained faithful to her international obligations; she has fulfilled her duties in a spirit of loyal impartiality; she has left nothing undone in order to maintain or to secure respect of her neutrality. The attack upon her independence with which the German Government threatens Belgium would constitute a flagrant violation of International Law. No strategic interest justifies the violation of that Law. If the Belgian Government accepted the proposals which are put forward in the German Note, it would sacrifice the honour of the nation, and would, at the same time, betray its trust towards Europe."

We know the sequel, its cruelty, its horror, its barbarism. The world shudders, and through long years it will shrink, from the thought of what this little country has suffered from being true to her trust. She has, however, done more than prove her own loyalty to her plighted word and her treaty obligations; she has aroused the conscience of mankind, she has kindled a torch that will not be extinguished.

It seems to be a law of life, mysterious and sombre, that man can only win forward through the suffering of the innocent. All the Reformations, political, social, religious, have been built on the bones and cemented by the blood of martyrs. Great causes have been advanced as much by misery as by valour,

by the patent consequences of Wrong as much as by the Proclamation of Right. When Belgium gave her answer to Germany she set a great example and gave a splendid message to mankind. It may be that, to be effective, it had to be sealed and sanctified by her sorrow.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SEDUCTION OF TURKEY

WAR was declared between the Allies and Turkey on October 30th, 1914. It was the astonishing end of an astonishing situation, which had its ludicrous as well as its tragic side. Here was a country, existing and likely to exist for long, on sufferance as a European Power, plunging into war, when her first interest was peace; and choosing for the mad adventure, not the moment when her friends were at the flood of fortune, but when the tide had begun to ebb, when victory was moving farther and farther away from their standards. From the standpoint of German need the moment was not ill-chosen for Germany, but on the Turkish side it was an act of doom.

It is here that the farcical side of the incident shows so garishly. Turkey went to war against her will. There have been cases where a Monarch has dragged an unwilling people into war, where a Cabinet have forced a war, or where, as in the days of Walpole, the people have compelled their ruler to make war. In Turkey, however, the Sultan, the Cabinet, and the people wanted peace, and yet they have stripped themselves naked for the struggle. The country will have to give the shirt from its back; it will be a nation only in name; it will be in pawn to a ruthless usurer. It will never be able to redeem its integrity if Germany should win; and if she loses there will be no Turkey at all. She has sold herself for thirty pieces of silver, and in the end she must hang herself. The incongruity of the position is increased by the fact that Turkey went to war at the bidding of one

who was no Turk, and to support the one great Power in Europe whose aims are most inimical to her interests.

The day has long passed since the Turks were the menace of Europe, thundering at the gates of Vienna and threatening to emulate the conquering Huns. For years Turkey has depended for her position in Europe on the support of those whose ancestors once trembled at the coming of the Turcoman hordes. During the period of her decadence her natural allies have been the Western Powers. They saved her more than once — in 1855 and 1878 — from complete destruction; they offered her advice which, had she followed it, would have spared her shame, loss and suffering. It need not be pretended that the Powers were disinterested in the course they took; but they asked of Turkey no more than that she should exist, and to behave herself so that her existence might be prolonged. They asked for no exhausting concessions, they sought no territorial aggrandizement at her expense; however selfish their motives may have been, it was not Turkey which had to suffer for them. It was in the interest of the Western Powers, such as France and Great Britain, that Turkey should be strong, while it was to the interest of Russia that she should be weak, or, better still, be expelled from Europe. As for Germany, she had no interest in Turkey save that which she manufactured to serve her suddenly developed ambitions in Persia and Asia Minor. She was not a Mediterranean Power. She had no Eastern possessions; unlike Great Britain, she was not concerned to avoid anything which might rouse ill-will in Islam; her interests in South Eastern Europe were defined by Bismarck as not worth the bones of a Pomeranian Grenadier, and Germany is not supposed to attach

great value to the life of her soldiers, in units or in masses, as this war has shown.

Prince Bismarck fell, and with him the era of purely domestic aggrandizement. As shown in a previous chapter, Germany made excursions now here, now there, in the world, prospecting for Empire. She picked up a few colonies, imposing in extent, which enabled her to talk in a large way of Colonial Empire, but she did nothing else. German genius does not incline towards the work of the pioneer. It can organize, but it cannot create, improvise or initiate successfully.

But Germany did not court Turkey merely for territorial aggrandizement, she intended also to make use of her as an instrument of war. Probably the direct military value of Turkey would not be great, but indirectly her assistance might be priceless. The German Military Memorandum of March 19th, 1913, is emphatic on the necessity of preparing for war by breeding discontent among the Moslem communities. It contains the following illuminating paragraph:

"It is absolutely necessary that we should open up relations, by means of well chosen organizations, with influential people in Egypt, Tunis, Algeria and Morocco, in order to prepare the measures which would be necessary in the case of a European war."

It was a dirty policy, this, of fomenting disloyalty in the territories of nations for whom Germany professed friendship, and so it seems to have appeared, even to the German Government, for the Memorandum adds:

"Whether we like it or not, it will be necessary to resort to preparations of this kind in order to bring a campaign rapidly to a conclusion."

Egypt was especially to be favoured with these attentions, since " more and more it serves as a bond between the intellectuals of the Mohammedan World." [1]

Turkey is not mentioned in that remarkable programme, probably because she had already been squared. In order to obtain the adhesion of the Mohammedan World, the capture of the head of Islam was clearly necessary. There followed devoted efforts to make the capture.

Turkey was delighted. Like Danaë, she was enveloped in a shower of gold. No small number of debts, written off as bad, were paid. Altruistic German officers reorganized the army; Krupp supplied cannon. The Germans not only showed the Turk how to order his household, but displayed sympathy with the new democratic idea most astonishing in view of their attitude towards social democracy at home. With the new Young Turk régime came a breaking-away from Turkey's old protectors. Germany became her friend, infinitely more zealous, more generous, more useful than ever they had been. To people so beneficent, so ready to bear the heat and burden of administration, so sufficiently strong to avert all fear of the hereditary enemy, a concession for a railway, which would enrich and open up Asia Minor, was a small return.

It is impossible to think that Turkish statesmen, who are not simple, did not see that the account for all these good things would have to be settled; but it did not trouble them sorely. A nation which borrowed money to build the *Osman* and the *Rechadie* at twenty per cent., would not look too curiously at the price of Germany's good services. If ever the

[1] French Yellow Book, No. 2.

idea that Germany might try to push commercial penetration into political control crossed the minds of the few wise men, they probably reflected that at such a time they could play off England and France against Germany, and so escape the penalty of their recklessness.

But one thing escaped their notice. The penetration of Asia Minor would not be of much value to Germany until she acquired an overland road thither. As she could not sail round past Dover and Gibraltar and Malta, she must perforce march *via* the Balkans and Constantinople. And to do that she found it necessary to connive at the ruin of Turkey in Europe. It was a shady, shabby business, so shady and shabby that probably Turkish statesmen, who are none too nice in their own diplomatic methods, hesitated to attribute it to Germany. However, there it was: Germany not only allowed, but encouraged the Balkan States to strengthen themselves at Turkey's expense, and even went so far as to tie the hands of her ally, Austria, while the Balkan League bent to their task. That Germany over-reached herself; that in trying to clear her road to Constantinople she substituted for the Turks a formidable Slav Confederation flushed with victory; that, again, in trying to undo this in her usual bungling way, she made Serbia an irreconcilable enemy, is neither here nor there. The point is that her diplomacy in the Balkans had behind it the intention of commercial development, to be followed by political control in Asia Minor; and that the price which Turkey would have to pay for German protection was nothing less than her national independence.

Turkey's decision to help Germany and Austria against the Alliance is all the more remarkable from the fact that while the Allied Powers could attack

her, the German Powers could do little or nothing to protect her. Russia could attack her in the Black Sea and the Caucasus, France and Britain could harry her on the Mediterranean coasts, Greece had the tempting islands of the Ægean to incite her, and the Balkan States might readily depart from their neutral attitude to pick up what remained of European Turkey. Should all this happen, neither Austria nor Germany could move a battalion or a battleship to her aid. She would have to fight it out on her own, bankrupt of cash and credit.

Even if victorious, what was she to gain? Which of her lost provinces was to be restored to her? Who was to make good the cost of the war? Was it quite certain that she would not actually be a loser by the victory of Germany? Austria in 1866 had bitter cause to regret her alliance with Prussia in 1864. History, in spite of the proverb, does sometimes repeat itself. Nor was it so certain that Germany would win. In August Turkey might have felt confident, but a good deal had happened between the triumphant march from Mons and the 30th of October.

Nor was Turkey under any necessity to go to war to save herself from indignity or wrong. No attack was directed at her. She had the guarantee of England, France and Russia that her integrity and independence should be preserved; and these were the only Powers which had a chance of violating her integrity and maintaining that violation. Yet she went to war. Sir Louis Mallet had an interview with the Turkish Minister of the Interior on September 6th, in which he neatly summed up the position.

"I told him that I had been informed that the Turkish Government attached no importance to the written declara-

tion which I and my French and Russian colleagues had made them respecting their integrity. I was greatly surprised at this attitude, but personally somewhat relieved, as to guarantee the integrity and independence of Turkey was like guaranteeing the life of a man who was determined to commit suicide."

In justice it must be said that, although the Turkish Government debated for six weeks before committing the rash act, they committed it unwillingly. They had no desire to end their country's existence, they were not even impelled to risk it for their own political welfare, and yet they "sold the pass." One man and two ships were their undoing. The ships were the *Goeben* and the *Breslau,* the man was Enver Pasha.

Enver Pasha is one of those men who float to the surface in times of political disturbance, especially perhaps in Oriental countries. His ability and vanity vary in an inverse ratio. Though of mediocre talent, he is pushing, brave, of picturesque appearance, and gifted with the highest arts of the window-dresser. Restless, popular, not over-handicapped with scruples, eager for power and the wealth which helps to power, he was the ideal agent of Germany's designs. Germany is ever on the look-out for such instruments. When she finds a Beyers or an Enver she knows precisely how to play the music that will lure him. By a coincidence too happy to be accidental, Enver was Minister of War in August last.

The two German cruisers found themselves in the Mediterranean at the same moment. Their movements when the war broke out were curious and apparently aimless. In the Teuton way, now familiar to the world, having bombarded leisurely an open town or two in Northern Africa, they did not dash for the Atlantic to assist the *Karlsruhe* in preying

upon commerce, or to join Admiral Spee's Squadron, as might have been expected. Instead, they touched at Messina, sailed out in martial trim with bands playing, and promptly made for the Dardanelles. They were destined for a greater purpose than even the slaughter of innocent non-combatants so popular in the navy to which they belonged.

From the moment they entered the Dardanelles on August 10th the fate of Turkey was settled, because her neutrality was compromised. There is no doubt that it was for that purpose they took refuge in Turkish waters. It was hoped that the Allies would be irritated into action; but when this hope failed the German vessels were sent out to commence warlike operations. That, in brief, is the story of the mission of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*. But these vessels did more even than that; they became the means of forcing Turkey into war.

There is not in the history of diplomacy any more curious story than that of this coercion. It brings a whiff of the Arabian Nights into the prosaic Chancelleries of the twentieth century. Perhaps to that factor may be due in some degree the success of German diplomacy, at Stamboul, which stands in sharp contrast to its clumsy failure throughout the pre-war negotiations in every other capital. Truth is, that German diplomacy, through lack of political ability in its foreign agents, is unsuited to modern conditions, as Prince Bülow has in effect admitted. It is also biassed by the belief that other nations are decadent; that they have lost their ideals; that Germany has a monopoly of merit; and it is further imbued with the ancient Prussian lust of war for the sake of war, and war for the sake of gain.

Such theories do not tend towards pliancy in negotiation, nor do they make for a high standard of

honour. Want of dexterity is balanced by want of scruple *plus* a mailed fist. To be successful, this diplomatic method depends on the correctness of the theories on which it is based. It will succeed if the nations to which it is applied are really decadent, devoid of ideals and unscrupulous. It will fail when it comes against a people which is virile, which has a sense of right, and which cannot be corrupted.

Thus it is that the methods which failed in London succeeded in Constantinople. The soil, naturally adapted to the Teutonic seed, had been carefully cultivated, and the ambassadorial farmer seems to have been aptly chosen. It is not often that one Ambassador has to write of a colleague as Sir Louis Mallet wrote of the German Ambassador in Constantinople:

"I think he may be telling the truth; but every statement he makes must be received with caution."

That this was no exaggeration is clear from Sir Louis Mallet's story:

"The German Embassy daily emits a stream of mendacity and calumny, which is circulated through the country by the Turkish newspapers, all of those in the Capital being in the pay of the German Embassy as a result of the large sums spent by it in corruption both in Constantinople and in the provinces." [2]

One of the stories was that Japan had only agreed to assist Great Britain in return for free immigration into the Pacific Coast, a free hand in China and a loan of £40,000,000. Another was that there had been a revolution in India. Such diplomatic methods would be shady enough if Turkey were already at war and they were designed to keep up the public enthusiasm, but to use them in order to lure into

[2] White Book on Rupture with Turkey, No. 70.

war a country whose first interest was peace, which desired peace, was an act of miserable turpitude.

The entire story is, indeed, intensely sordid, from the false sale of the refugee cruisers to the bombardment of Odessa. It may roughly be divided into two parts: the period before October 26th, and the three days following. During the first period the German "Conspirators," to use Sir Louis Mallet's description, proceeded mainly by negotiations mixed with corruption. When those methods seemed likely to fail, force was employed, and force availed.

From the opening of the war there was a "certain liveliness" in Turkey, partly due to the action of the British Government in acquiring the Turkish vessels then being built in England, but for the most part probably the artificial result of subterranean intrigue. The sending of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* belonged to the plot. Ostensibly they were sold to the Turkish Government, but they still remained in charge of their German crews. German officers and German money reached Constantinople. Though neutrality was professed by the Government, it was not observed. There were mysterious meetings between Enver Pasha and Bedouin chiefs; the Valis of certain coast towns used language of menace towards British naval commanders; untenable pretensions to territorial waters were advanced; there was even a large manufacture of Indian military uniforms, to be used by Turkish agents in Egypt. All along the Nile Valley, from Cairo to Kordofan, Turkish and German emissaries were busy, fomenting discontent among Arab chiefs, tempting officers and civil servants with bribes, smuggling explosives against the day when these seductions would bear fruit. The Allies would have had ample excuse for breaking off diplomatic relations any time during

August, September and October. This, however, they were resolved not to do. Their policy was clearly to let the breach come, if it must come, from Turkey herself. It was plain that Germany's object was to create unrest among the Moslem peoples of India and Africa. To have been impatient with Turkey would have been to play Germany's game. So it was that Ambassadors quietly endured gross affronts. They knew themselves played with, but they did their duty by pointing out how foolish Turkey was to let herself be made a cat's-paw.

They warned Turkey of what would happen if she sided with Germany and Germany was beaten. On the other hand, they did not ask her to join the Allies. They asked her neutrality, and for it they promised a guarantee of her integrity and independence. All they said was plain and simple, all they did was open and aboveboard. The wisdom of their course has been justified by results. The world of Islam with one accord has seen through German intrigue, and has at once bewailed and condemned the insensate folly of those who yielded to it.

Towards the end of October the Conspirators found themselves compelled to take decisive action. They had got as much money from Germany as they were likely to get, and things were not going well with the German armies. If Turkey was to be brought in, it had to be then or never. Accordingly they decided to bring matters to a climax by offering the Grand Vizier the alternative of complicity or resignation. It would appear that this scheme was abandoned, owing to the Russian victories on the Vistula occurring about this time.

The ill-success of the German armies, indeed, threatened to wreck everything. At a meeting of the Committee Leaders on Oct. 26th, it was decided

to send Halil Bey, the President, on a mission to Berlin; and this was regarded as a partial victory for the Peace Party. Halil Bey did not go, however, because "of a more than usually blunt hint from the German representative in Constantinople." At this point, the War Party took matters into their own hands. Two capital events occurred: a body of 2,000 Bedouins entered the Sinai Peninsula, with the idea of making a raid on the Suez Canal; and Odessa and other Russian ports were bombarded on Oct. 29th.

After this event the situation became hopeless. As Germany had, a few months earlier, precipitated war by her ultimatum to Russia, at the moment when negotiation promised to bring about accommodation between Russia and Austria; so now, for her own ends, Turkey was dragged into a war to which her Government, and probably the bulk of the people, were opposed. But even then the Allies gave Turkey a last chance. The Grand Vizier, who, throughout the piece, seems to have exaggerated his own influence or underestimated the strength of the unscrupulous forces opposing him, protested that he could still undo the work of Enver, Talaat, and the German Ambassador. Would the Allies await the issue of a Council to be held that night at his house?

They waited, the Council was held, the Grand Vizier and Djavid Bey fought for peace, and the majority of the Ministers upheld them; but nothing was done. Nothing indeed could be done to avert war save to dismiss the German naval officers and to expel the German military mission. Germany's intrigues, however, had been too effective, her bribery too complete. The conspirators stayed, while the trusted patriots repeated the crime of their forebears who sold the Schipka Pass thirty-five years before. As in

the old Arabian tale, Turkey was bestridden and throttled by an incubus from which she never could free herself.

On the fourth of November Tewfik Pasha took leave of Sir Edward Grey. Even at that last moment, the door was opened for Turkey's retreat from ruin.

"I informed Tewfik Pasha," says Sir Edward Grey, "that if his Government wished that hostilities between the two countries should cease, the only chance was to dismiss the German naval and military missions." A few days before this M. Sazonoff had used the same language to the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at Petrograd. It was of no avail. Forbearance could go no further. Anger at Turkish folly cannot altogether obliterate a feeling of pity for the nation thus deceived and ruined by Germany's remorseless and conscienceless policy. The responsibility for what may happen lies, however, not with the Allied Powers but with corrupt and misguided Turkey, and with Germany the jungle enemy of civilization.

CHAPTER XV

SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE AND THE BALKAN QUESTION

"To-day events move so rapidly that it is exceedingly difficult to state with technical accuracy the actual state of affairs, but it is clear that the peace of Europe cannot be preserved." [1]

In one sense these words would have been almost equally true at any time during the past decade, as previous chapters will have indicated. The only real change in European conditions on the afternoon of the third of August, 1914, was one of swift acceleration. Events slowly moving over a lengthened past had come to sudden climax. In spite of outward seeming Europe had not been at peace for many years. To say that two hostile armies camped within sight of each other's camp fires, are at peace, merely because they await the dawn before exchanging shots, is an illusion; and that had been the state of Europe since the beginning of the twentieth century, through causes already discussed; through ambitions and policies now familiar to the world. In all those trembling years there was, to all anxious Europe, a recognized source from which fatal disturbance might spring. The festering wound in the South Eastern States was spreading year by year its malignant influence through the diseased body of Europe. In the end it did the worst that all men feared. What the apparition in shining armour and the cruise of the

[1] Sir Edward Grey, in the House of Commons, August 3rd, 1914.

Panther, each in turn, had failed to produce, the pistol shot in Serajevo brought on with incredible rapidity. The truth about that crime, could it be known, would furnish a key to the whole enigma. But that truth cannot be known now. With a hideous conflict testing the endurance and virtues of nations, it will make clearer the whole situation if we recall the main incidents in the grim, yet inspiring story of the growth of nationality in the Balkans; if we again take note of the forces which make the story grim.

The history of the nations and races of Balkan territory is a prolonged chronicle of discontent, oppression and violence; of dishonour and treachery; but also of high ideals and fervent patriotism. All that incalculable turmoil of passions and ambitions, vices and virtues, has come from one evil thing — the long-continued and never successful attempt at the despotic domination of one race by another. That is the germ of the Balkan disease.

It has taken five centuries to drive the Turk from tyranny over all South Eastern Europe to his present final clutch on the nethermost extremity of that land. Through long years the inhabitants and rightful owners of those trampled territories suffered a misery of wrongs and persecutions, from which it is one of the wonders of history that they have survived with any remnant of ambition, or even of racial self-consciousness. The Turks had early discovered what has ever been the besetting sin of the Balkan people, their afflicting proneness to jealous division among themselves. Taking advantage of this by every means known to a despotic nation, ruling a numerically and spiritually superior people, they long contrived to hold the territory against aggression from without and in spite of internal rebellion. Even now

that the Ottoman Empire has passed away from Europe the evil heritage of that rule still broods upon the land. The very peoples themselves, and, above all, their later European masters have, to their shame, assumed the traditions and usages of the Turkish rule.

History will record it to the honour of the Serbians that they were the first to summon the combined courage and strength to rise against the Sultan. In 1804 Kara George, the swineherd, led them in successful revolt. The Turks regained control in 1813; but at last, in 1830, after many years of determined fighting, the Serbians, strongly supported by Russia, achieved political autonomy, though still remaining tributary to the Sultan. The Greeks were the next to respond in arms to the call of the national spirit, and they actually attained complete independence before Serbia. The Greek war of Independence, from 1821 to 1829, ran a course of varied fortune, in which, at the end, the courage of the little nation, aided by the moral and material encouragement of the greater Powers, succeeded in casting off the foreign yoke. The negotiations and interventions succeeding this war finally resulted in conflict between Russia and Turkey. In the end Greek independence was firmly guaranteed, and the European possessions and power of the Sultan suffered severe shrinkage. Through the intercession of Russia the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia became practically independent. From these events and their accompanying animosities and ambitions came another Russo-Turkish struggle in 1853, which led directly to the Crimean War.

In all these years of strife the spirit and freedom of the separate Balkan States persisted and increased through crime and turmoil, surviving every check of

their own or other's making. Each upheaval and each readjustment brought to some one of them greater independence, and, usually, to all of them greater discontent and ambition. Out of the Crimean War emerged the semi-independent State of Roumania; the result of national consciousness and ambition awakened among the kindred peoples of the two adjoining States, Moldavia and Wallachia. In 1862 these united under one ruler and assumed the name Roumania. After a few years of civil strife they chose as king a member of the Roman Catholic branch of the Hohenzollerns. In the early years of his reign King Charles developed a vigorous and liberal policy in the affairs of his country; and especially achieved important results in the organization of his army, with Prussian equipment and under Prussian instruction. His success in this largely contributed to the influential position which Roumania has since held in Balkan affairs. It is important to remember this German element in the person of the ruler, and in military affairs, when appraising Roumania's relations with her neighbours.

In 1875 Turkish oppression, driven to desperate measures by losses of territory and revenue, brought on a revolt in Herzegovina, aided and encouraged by the Slavs of Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and even Hungary. In the following year the violence of the situation was increased by revolutions at Constantinople, with attendant outbreaks of religious and racial fanaticism in outrage and massacre. The Christians in Bulgaria, no longer able to endure the intolerable situation, rose in rebellion. The Turks retaliated with a fury of bloodshed and atrocity which horrified Europe. Then it was that Mr. Gladstone denounced "the unspeakable Turk" and urged the expulsion of the Sultan from Europe. It remained,

however, for Serbia and Montenegro to initiate action. They declared war against the Turks, and thus gave encouragement to a general uprising in Bulgaria. In the following year, Russia — the mass of her people moved by sympathy with their suffering kinsmen — brought her forces to bear against Turkey. Allied with Roumania, now claiming complete independence, and with Serbia and Montenegro, the Russians waged a victorious campaign almost to the very gates of Constantinople.

These hostilities were concluded in 1878 by the Treaty of San Stefano, in which Serbia, Montenegro, and Roumania were recognized as independent, and by which was created a self-governing State of Bulgaria. This treaty was not to endure for long. It pleased no one save the Russians and the Bulgars. Each of the other States felt itself in some way affected or injured by the redistribution of territories and boundaries; and the greater Powers became mutually apprehensive and suspicious of the possible advantages and increments to each other from these rapid changes in Balkan affairs. To allay this common distrust, therefore, and with the intention of considering all interests except those of the Sultan, who was to be disregarded, the representatives of the Powers met at the Congress of Berlin.

This Congress was a cold-blooded liquidation of the insolvent States of Turkey in Europe under the "honest brokerage" of Bismarck. The only definite and permanent result was the demolishment, by partition, of the Turkish domain. As an attempted solution of the Balkan question it was a failure. Most of what was done there was later undone or ignored; and what remained led only to further dissensions among the several States and among the greater Powers hovering over them. Montenegro, Serbia,

and Roumania were given freedom from Turkish suzerainty; but with such unjust arrangement of their boundaries, in defiance of racial claims, as to give them a source of discontent enduring for evil even to the present day. Austria was allowed to "occupy" Bosnia and Herzegovina in the interest of the general peace. With what results we have seen.

The failure of the decisions of the Congress of Berlin was well shown in the case of Bulgaria. For reasons best known to the Powers, the Northern Bulgarians were separated from the Southern Bulgarians, in spite of their racial and historical unity and their very natural desires. It was attempted to make the Bulgarians of the south forget they were Bulgarians by the easy device of bidding them call themselves Eastern Roumelians. The Provinces endured this irrational arrangement for seven years, and then disregarding the Treaty of Berlin, proclaimed themselves united; and they did it with such spirit and determination that the Powers thought it well not to interfere. Other events of the kind form an important chapter in the history of every Balkan war and revolt. In nineteenth century zest for artifical nationality, one all-important truth was continually overlooked or disregarded — honest recognition of the fact that blood and tradition are stronger than maps or treaties.

In the bloody years preceding the Berlin Congress the greater European nations had been looking on the South Eastern States with watchful eyes, now helping here, now restraining there, in keeping with their sympathies, national characteristics and aims. England and France espoused the cause of Greece from the impulse of their liberal and democratic principles; Russia supported the Slav and Christian every-

where against the Mohammedan Turk. There were other and intricate political and commercial motives on all sides. Very early, and to their sorrow, the Powers learned how dangerous to their mutual relations was any intervention, however just or well intended, in the troubled affairs of these small States. After the Berlin Congress, however, these affairs, thus brought into prominence before the world, assumed growing importance in European politics. The States, themselves, over-stimulated by a new freedom, and irritated by the irksome arrangement of their territories, fought continually with one another. The opportunity for the ambitious Powers was irresistible. Playing with Balkan fire became a diplomatic sport in South Eastern Europe. It was a dangerous game. As the opposing forces in the European balance of power became more and more strictly aligned into two hostile camps, and as the balance became more and more finely adjusted, the Balkan question grew in importance and perplexity. A jealous scrutiny of the trend and turning of events there became an essential policy for all. The slightest acquisition of further control or influence by either side threatened the equilibrium.

To Great Britain, with her world-strewn Empire and her immense sea-borne commerce, there is always and everywhere the necessity of vigilantly protecting her interests and safety against the ambitious operations of rival nations. Hence, while she has rightly disclaimed any direct personal interest in the internal affairs of the Balkans, she has, nevertheless, been obliged to keep her careful attention upon that region, because of the serious reaction which certain developments might have upon her rights and possessions. The position of the Suez Canal, alone, would have made this precaution necessary.

Russia, on her part, in addition to her natural championship of the Christian against the Mohammedan and of the Slav against all oppressors, had vital reasons for concern in South Eastern politics. Her geographical position, and the climatically hampered condition of her northern ports, made it essential that the trade routes to the south and east, so necessary for her internal prosperity, should be kept free of hindrance, to her commerce. To both Russia and Great Britain, therefore, the affairs of the Balkans have long been of grave moment. If their separate claims and purposes have occasionally brought them into conflict, history has for the most part been frank to admit the justification on both sides.

Strong influences have worked to make the policies of Germany and Austria-Hungary in South Eastern Europe of mutual and common interest and advantage. Austria, checked by Prussia in the north and driven out of Italy in the south, turned her activities to the States on her eastern frontier as the only opportunity for compensation and for future expansion. In the interests of her commercial ambitions she bent her energies towards the acquisition and development of a direct trade route from Vienna to Salonica. This route was to be so much under the influence of Austria, that she should have free access to eastern waters, with parallel control. To this cherished project the two most serious obstacles were Russian power and Serbian independence. Austria had long been jealous of Russian influence, long apprehensive of Russian policy in the Balkans. Every increase of Russian power — and likewise every growth of Balkan independence which accompanied it — hampered the pursuit of Austria's commercial designs. It has therefore been to Austria's advan-

tage to support the Turk against Russian aggression; to inflame further the easily kindled jealousies among the separate States, so that in the end their weakness might be her strength. It was also of grave concern to her internally that every movement towards the strengthening of the individual States, or of the Slavonic races in general should be restricted. Freedom and contentment among the Balkan peoples could come only at the expense of the Dual Monarchy. Austria-Hungary knew this, and acted accordingly.

It was Metternich who called Italy, in the days of her weakness, "a geographical expression." That great and sinister statesman, whose rule and doctrine have been the unstable bulwark of Austria's strength, might well have applied the term to his own nation. Those very conditions which Italy overcame, Austria, the last rallying-ground of feudalism, has preserved. What she would not and could not recognize, she has tried to strangle. To-day it is destroying her. Look at the map of the Dual Monarchy. By its artificial obtrusiveness it is an offence and an aggression to all her neighbours, a fatal infirmity to herself. In a great jagged outline it stabs north into Galicia, east into Roumania, south into the Slavonic territories of Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Montenegro, and southwest into Italy. A more illogical creation of conquest and diplomacy could not be conceived. It is a colossal impertinence in the face of all sanctions of race, religion, history, and common sense. The frontier of Austria-Hungary is a living wound in the politics of Europe. Across her borders, on every side, the Monarchy is fronted by the animosities of States and peoples compelled mutely to witness the bondage of their kinsmen, raped from all natural associations of blood and tradition to build up this "ramshackle

empire." Within she is torn by the rage and hatred of vassal subjects, chafing under oppression and stirred to revolt by the sight of their free brethren in the independent States. The cold statistical fact of this precarious structure is, that twenty-one million people rule over and attempt to control the thought and the will, as they do the lives and liberties, of thirty-two millions, with whom they have no ties or relations save those they are able to impose by power and might; while this ruling minority is again composed of two utterly unassociated races with no mutual sympathies save that of common support in the task of suppressing the aspirations of their more numerous dependants. In this task every means of discrimination and oppression known to the history of the Overlord has been used to postpone the inevitable readjustment. As the majority of this vast subject population are of Slavonic blood, Austria-Hungary has had to watch with growing apprehension the steady gain in strength and independence of this race in the adjoining States; to combat it as best she dared by all manner of intrigue and interference, political, economic, and educational. This is the long-drawn, sullen conflict between Austria-Hungary on the one side and Serbia and Russia on the other. Independent and democratic Serbia is the ideal and inspiration of all the lesser Slavic peoples. Russia, powerful and loyal, is their protector and champion. Against the influence of these two, Austria has been forced to strain every nerve in the attempt to suppress the Pan-Slavic spirit, so dangerous to her dynastic security.

A brief historical reminder will serve to show how the internal problems of Austria have always dictated her foreign policy. She has consistently and tradi-

tionally been the opponent of the freedom of small States and the unification of kindred peoples. In the Greek wars of liberty and independence it was Austrian support of Turkey which prolonged the agony of that struggle. When the Belgians revolted against Holland, Austria and Prussia were ready and eager to crush their hopes. Italy's freedom and solidarity were won only through conflict with Austria. By habit and by necessity Austria has long been the enemy to national liberty.

The interests of Germany in South Eastern Europe are either coincident or parallel with those of Austria. In no way do they conflict, so long as Germany retains her present dominion over the Dual Monarchy. Just as Austria sought to control the Vienna-Salonica route, so Germany, always ample in her ambitions, conceived the idea of expanding the Austrian project into a great Pan-Germanic line from Berlin to Bagdad. To the German imperial visionaries the Bagdad Railway not only meant the opening of Eastern commerce to Germany by a shorter route than the Suez Canal; it even promised the Germanization, and finally permanent conquest, of Egypt, Syria, Arabia, Persia and India.

Thus it was the Germans openly declared the Turks to be their " natural allies " and, with Austria, exerted every influence not only to conciliate the Sultan, but to strengthen his grasp upon the last remnant of Europe within his hands. In the concessions granted to the German railway companies by the Sultan in 1902, Germany achieved a virtual protectorate over the Turkish Empire, and won an advantage in the Near East over all the other Powers. And now Turkey is the ally in war of Germany. The ruin which long years of diplomacy and trickery

made ready, the menacing guns of the *Goeben* made certain; and Turkey moves on to her doom. Inextricably involved in the intrigues of greater Powers, hounded on every side by guilty fears of attack and spoliation, deceived, bribed and threatened, the blind and impotent invalid of Europe stumbles forward, scimitar in hand, to death and dissolution.

It must be remembered where Germany is concerned, that friendliness with the Turks and the support of Turkey in Europe have always brought two results: the alienation of Russia, and injury to the Christian Balkan peoples. Germany daring the one, did not hesitate at the other. Whatever advantages she may have won by her Balkan and Ottoman policies, they have cost her dear. The armies hammering at the eastern gates of Prussia to-day are the reward for her betrayal of Slavic friendship, of which over so many, many years she had complete control. Germans in the service of Russia had managed her administration and inspired her foreign policy. Russian Tsars did the bidding of Prussian Kings. Russia's misgovernment of Poland had its origin in Prussian influence and policy. When Russia would have been liberal, Prussia drove her to be tyrannical. A discontented Russian Poland was a constant advantage to Prussia.

With the hope of commercial gain, which has led Germany to support Austrian tactics in South Eastern Europe, other motives have worked. Germany's controlling hand over Austria-Hungary, and the value of the latter as an ally, rest upon the preservation of the German-Magyar hegemony. The very difficulties which she herself has encountered in the pursuit of her repressive measures in Prussian Poland have made Germany of one mind with Austria con-

cerning any growth of Slavic power or freedom in the south.

That aspiration which stirs the Southern Slavs to self-expression, to ardour for independence and unity on racial lines, is only, for the present, the predominant manifestation of the great hope which has raised its common cry in many tongues of suffering men. It is the same zeal which has kept the ancient tribes of Albania unsubjugated and unsubmissive through years of tyranny; which awoke the broken Bulgars to successful effort; which calls the Roumanians, though proudly claiming another race, to join the common cause in the final struggle for this ideal. It is the same cry from Greece to Galicia: freedom, independence, and self-respect. We of the West have been slow to realize that other lesser and more primitive peoples might be honestly desiring those things which we so richly enjoy.

The year 1908 affords an excellent illustration of the various currents and eddies in the affairs of these turbulent States. At the time of the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 Serbia had relapsed into a position of subservient vassalage to Austria; and the Southern Slavs everywhere had failed to achieve a strength commensurate with their spirit and ambition. Twenty-five years, however, accomplished much. In 1903 came the revolution at Belgrade, with its attendant ghastliness of murder and outrage, horrifying the civilized world. Those hideous events, though they brought Serbia low in public esteem, were at least not without material benefit to her. By the sanguinary and shameful removal of her pro-Austrian rulers she made final escape from an insufferable tutelage. The impetus given to the aspirations of the Southern Slavs generally by the

event was tremendous. A free Slav State, supported and protected by Russia, gave hope and encouragement to all others of that race still enduring the traditional bondage.

This was a definite set-back to Austria. It brought further difficulties to her never easy internal affairs; it was a serious restriction to her foreign policies. She waited the opportunity for retaliation. It came in 1908. In that year she took advantage of the Young Turkish revolution, formally to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbia and Montenegro, offended and seriously threatened by this move, made vain protests. Russia, with her army disorganized and her strength not yet recovered from the Japanese War, was forced to the keen humiliation of giving way before Austro-German aggression.

It was characteristic of Austria that she could not be satisfied with this achievement. She must needs add brutal insult to real injury. Feeling that popular opinion and future history would not hold her above suspicion, she decided to provide herself with a shield and justification for these acts. To this end she perpetrated one of the meanest and clumsiest plots to which a great nation has ever lent cognizance or support. In the summer of 1908 Austria and Hungary together connived in an orgy of treason-hunts in Croatia. *Agents provocateurs* beat up the miserable quarry, and arrests were wholesale and indiscriminate. The victims of this despotic drag-net were held as hostages against any action by indignant Serbia. To cover these inquisitorial methods the infamous High Treason Trial was begun at Agram, as is related in an earlier chapter.

These wretched tactics brought their own reward. The whole Slavic brotherhood in the Balkans, enraged by the treachery of Austria, stifled all jealous-

ies between themselves, and the Balkan League was formed for common defence. Russia, stirred profoundly by the wrongs of her kinsmen and chagrined at her own impotence, resolved never again through weakness or irresolution to accept such an affront at the hands of Germany and Austria. Straightway Serbia began to organize and perfect her army. The later Balkan wars should have warned Austria of Serbia's determination, and of the success with which she was preparing to enforce it, and has enforced it.

Austria and Germany confidently awaited the outcome of the wars in 1912, believing that separate ambitions and mutual jealousies among the States would soon destroy the League. This cynical hope was almost justified. Bulgaria, insatiable for gain, listened to insidious promptings from Berlin and Vienna, and revolted from the League, claiming a lion's share of the spoils. But that was as far as it went. Serbia and Greece proved equal to the emergency, and Bulgaria was well punished for her treachery. To add to the Austro-German disappointment, Roumania, a spectator only of the first war, asserted her integrity by taking up the cause of her sister States. The only consolation which remained for Austria was her success in circumventing Serbia's hopes for an Adriatic port by a hypocritical pretence of creating an autonomous State out of Albania.

The defeat of Turkey, and the general strengthening, materially and spiritually, of the Southern Slavs, which resulted from these wars was most disastrous to the plans of the Germanic Powers. Lacking leaders and without common policy, the Balkan States had been doomed to flounder hopelessly in the meshes of Austrian intrigue. Out of this wretched situation Serbia led the way. Victorious in war, nearly

doubled in territory and population, united in spirit, independent, and democratic, she became the type and focus of all hopes. Also behind Serbia stood Russia, silently gathering strength, with what effectiveness we are only now beginning to realize.

The breach between Slav and German had become complete and irreconcilable. In the north, Russian dignity stood opposed to Teuton ambition. In the south, the unquenchable spirit of the race awaited the final struggle against despotism and oppression. By its very nature the Slavic movement was bound to succeed. All the influences of modern political thought and enlightened forms of government encouraged its growth. The spread of education amongst the subject races, with the realization of their position, brought the will to escape. Austria could only view with grave apprehension the gradual loosening of her grasp upon these States and the insidious weakening of her control over her own restive population. Germany, conscious of this degeneration of her ally, urged Austria to redouble her futile reactionary efforts. It now became urgent to Prussian hopes that the long awaited day might arrive before Austria was too feeble and disrupted to be of any aid in the struggle. A period of utter political depravity fell upon South Eastern Europe.

To the credit of the Austrians it must be recorded that conditions in their half of the Monarchy had improved. Liberal reforms had been inaugurated, and, by the conciliatory measures of leaders like the Archduke Ferdinand, the material condition of the subject peoples had been ameliorated. In many places in Austria, indeed, the administrative power had been so far readjusted that the Germans were rapidly being forced to take the defensive against their more numerous Slav fellow-citizens. For the

Hungarian half of the Imperial edifice, however, no censure can be too severe. Blindly ignoring the lesson of their own past, the Magyars stopped at nothing to insure and preserve their political hegemony. Every method which intrigue could devise was employed to deny the subject races their constitutional and human rights. It is little wonder that the independent Serbs felt it their mission to relieve the unhappiness of their kinsmen under this oppression, and to this end did not hesitate to carry the war into the enemy's country. It is not to be denied that much of the unrest in the Slavonic territories of Austria-Hungary was due to propaganda originating from Belgrade. The nature and success of these operations brought retaliation in kind. The only hope for the preservation of the Dual Monarchy lay in the destruction of Serbia. On the one side was the relentless German-Magyar despotism, wielding its appropriate weapons to gain its necessary ends; and on the other, the desperate zeal of the Serbs, striving for freedom and self-expression. All the wretched tangle of petty motives cannot however concern us now. The world is not troubling about details today. Only fundamentals count. On the twenty-eighth day of June a fanatical boy shot a man at Serajevo. That boy knew little about alliances and treaties and balances and secret diplomacy. Yet, for all that, he and his silly pistol brought the worst fears of all Europe to red fruition. To Germany came the chance to spring her mine.

When the Archduke Ferdinand died the hopes of Austria-Hungary died with him. Patriotism is a difficult quality to maintain in a land which is only a dynastic fiction. Yet if any Austrian of this generation could pretend to that virtue it was the murdered Archduke. He was the last support of his tottering

Empire. Where he was not loved he was respected. Standing as he did between the German reactionaries and the Slavic insurgents, he alone had the power to hold those irreconcilable elements together or apart as necessity demanded; and for this very reason both parties regarded his future advent to the throne with profound distrust. His ultimate fate was the reward for attempting a brave but impossible thing.

Strangely enough, the only authoritative commentary which we now have upon the Serajevo crime comes from the lips of the murdered man himself. The Archduke had the privilege, seldom granted to royal martyrs, of making what may almost be considered as a posthumous statement. It will be remembered that so little pains was taken to guard the royal progress through the hostile streets of Serajevo that the would-be assassins were able to make two murderous attempts, the second one successful. After the first of these attempts, it is reported on good authority that the Archduke said: "The fellow will get the Golden Cross of Merit for this."

We must leave these secret and inscrutable things, and the none too enigmatical words of the Archduke, and consider the immediate effects of the crime. They are more apparent and more important to the world just now than all its obscure causes.

It is but poor respect to the followers of Metternich and Bismarck to believe that circumstances, so favourable to Germanic hopes, were of purely fortuitous origin. The Day had dawned; and Germany was no laggard to the call of her self-appointed destiny. This time it was in no martial masquerade of bright metal with which she supported Austria, but in all the deadly earnest of dull grey mobilization.

How the other nations met this crisis is recorded

in preceding chapters. Future ages will reflect with awe upon a great spectacle of human solidarity. Civil strife, social rebellion, political dissension, all the unnecessary impedimenta of ordinary national life were cast overboard, as Dreadnoughts are cleared for action; and the peoples of the world stepped forward to meet their fate and to decide the destiny of mankind. The false peace of the long, waiting years was ended. In its place came the relief of good honest combat; to have its way and be done.

And being done, what then? This world that we know is doomed if it has not the wit to profit by its own past history. From the Balkan States came the immediate cause of this war, and from the Balkan States may be learned the essential lesson for the future. The long-continued effort to suppress the vital aspirations of a subject race has brought catastrophe upon the whole world. One small, seething kettle of barbarism has boiled over and flayed the civilization of Europe. At the end of it all, then, may it not be hoped that the great nations, wearied and sickened with carnage and ruin, will see to it that the cause of all this havoc is removed from the path of future progress?

To Germany small States are an abomination. The endless variations from type which are encouraged by the smaller States are repugnant to her sense of ordered uniformity; the individualism naturally arising from the public opinion of limited communities is in conflict with her organized mechanism of thought; she finds in their enforced vigilance an age-long struggle for existence, seminaries of freedom abhorrent, even fatal to her disciplined autocracy; she sees in them the eternal indictment of her doctrine that size is sanctity and strength the rule and

measure of law. Liberty has ever had its birth in the small community. That which was true of Hellas and of Rome, is true to-day. The Balkan States are to the Europe of this century what Holland and Belgium, Switzerland, the Tyrol and Navarre were to the Europe of the last three hundred years; what the Greek Republics were to Europe before the Christian era. The sin-darkened cloud which hangs over South Eastern Europe cannot wholly conceal the great forces of liberty and progress which are struggling to find expression beneath the violence of war. To an autocracy throned on bayonets, to a constitution modelled on the barrack-yard, such aspirations are hateful, are pregnant with danger. So Germany has ever regarded small States with a contempt that is half fear; so she has conquered and so ground them down.

If Germany and Austria could win in this war, it would be because those ideals and methods of government which they represent are more durable than we believe them to be. When they admit their defeat, come that soon or late, there will be exposed the inherent and disastrous fallacy in those ideals and methods which they now so vainly try to impose upon an aggrieved and revolted world. This globe, which has survived Philip of Spain and Napoleon of Corsica, will survive William of Potsdam, and will see to it that, not only by the overwhelming voice of popular sentiment, but by every device within the ingenuity of peace-loving and law-abiding nations, it will be impossible for another such pretender to the Imperial throne of the universe ever to arise.

The future security of Europe, the future peace of the world, will depend upon the removal of conditions which made this war possible and inevitable. The Teuton ideal of dominion by might must be cut

out like a cankerous growth from the body of Europe, that it may never infect the being of any other race or nation. The belief that one race or State may, by force and power of arms, impose its will upon the spiritual lives of another race or State is as dangerous as it is unsuccessful. It is degrading alike to upholder and to victim. The whole history of South Eastern Europe bears tragic witness to the wrongs and perils of the system; and wherever else the German grasp has tightened the baleful influence of this ideal has been felt. It has brought neither satisfaction nor profit to the Germans in their colonies. In Alsace-Lorraine, in Schleswig-Holstein, and in Prussian Poland it has produced only injustice and writhing discontent; in Galicia and in the Slavonic territories of Austria-Hungary it has been brutally futile.

For this wasteful and impotently reactionary system must be substituted another of proven worth and benefit. Not in boasting or in vain pride may it be claimed that the Anglo-Saxon ideal and method furnishes the proper substitute with which to redress the wrongs of the past. Common sense can scarcely deny the efficiency of the British method. India, Africa, and French Canada show the effects of a rational and effective treatment of the race question. Surely there is in this alone deep reason to feel that it is the duty of the nations fighting to-day for these principles to see to it that they are applied by all great Powers in their relations with lesser States. We of the greater nations to-day have been taught humility and respect by one of these small communities. Belgium has shown us how inestimably precious the small nation is; how it leavens the mass; and how fundamentally necessary for the political and spiritual welfare of the brotherhood of peoples it is that

the weaker members shall be guaranteed full freedom.

"The merits of the dispute between Austria and Serbia were not the concern of His Majesty's Government." [2]

That position was properly assumed as long as there was the faintest hope of preserving the peace of Europe; but with the peace of Europe shattered beyond repair, and the fondest hopes of a new century wrecked with fire and shrapnel, it now becomes most vitally the concern of Great Britain to provide by every resource in her power a security for future generations against any such disastrous disputes, irrespective of their merits. The development of the two principles upon which Anglo-Saxon civilization is based will provide that security. There must be everywhere a wider extension of liberty to those diversities in thought and action which spring from race and tradition; and there must accompany it a general strengthening of the mutual regard for public law and equity among nations. It is for these two principles that this war is being fought. And with all its cost and sacrifice it will have been in vain, if at the end these principles are not reaffirmed and strengthened. To the Balkans in particular they should be faithfully applied in such a territorial redistribution on racial and national lines as may promise the growth of liberty, contentment, and comity among long afflicted peoples, and so guard the peace of Europe against further rupture from that source. As upon the re-establishment of a free and independent Belgium now depends the whole future of international law and justice, so upon free and contented States in the Balkans depends the fu-

[2] Sir Edward Grey; British White Paper, No. 5.

ture hope of political liberty in Europe. Only the most wilful blindness can ignore the lessons of Belgium and the Balkans. By respect for race alone will come sympathy and amity among the peoples of the world; and by the respect for law alone will come concord and community of spirit.

CHAPTER XVI

CIVILIZATION AND THIS WAR

THIS World War has been fruitful in surprises; in the revelation of new factors of prodigious consequence; in the abasement of many theories with attendant disappointments. The most tragic of the disappointments has been suffered by those who thought that, murderous as the mechanism of war had become, its methods and morals had so far advanced as to rob it of its most poignant terrors. They believed that while modern science had, with devilish skill, made the battlefield an inferno so terrible, that it probably had over-reached itself by making battles almost impossible, at least the wars of the present would be less dreadful than those of the past. Both these predictions were wrong. The present war has shown us that human nature retains reserves of stoutness which triumph over the paralysing strokes of science; that mind and flesh and blood can at long last defeat the machine. In this, distressing as the results of the conflict are, we may find confidence for the future of the race. It is stronger of nerve and soul than we had thought it. But the disproof of the second and more hopeful prognosis leads to a less cheering conclusion. If, during the last few months we have seen human nature rising to as heroic heights as it has ever known, we have also seen it sinking to new depths of infamy. Things have been done in Flanders and in France, in Poland and Galicia, which might induce the belief that the moral progress of mankind has been painfully small.

The disappointment is the more bitter because the

war shows that one of the most advanced European races is still a slave to Force, and believes that power gives warrant for rejecting humane principles. For years men have striven to govern war by rules which should palpably reduce the sufferings of combatants and mitigate the position of the non-combatant civil populations: the Geneva Convention and the Conferences at Brussels and The Hague laboured bravely towards that end. Loyally carried into effect, these rules would have been of the highest value; but that they were observances voluntarily imposed upon themselves by civilized nations was infinitely more valuable.

It may have been superstition which made the *tropaion* of the Greeks immune even from those whose defeat it commemorated; but whatever the origin of such rules, we know that over two thousand years ago regulations were made intended to diminish the harshness of war. War in the old days was a barbarous business at best, but it was not utterly anarchical; there were limits. Towns were razed to the ground and the land sown with salt, but many cities — cities destroyed in this war — survived centuries of conflict.

In mediæval war there was but little mercy; but there was a certain fellowship among the orders of knighthood which opened the gates gradually to ideas of compassion, while it certainly developed the sense of honourable obligation. It is, however, remarkable that even in those days the German States lagged behind in the march of humanity. The German knights were robust fighters, but they were not sportsmen, they did not " play the game." Froissart, writing in the days of that star of chivalry, the Black Prince, laments that it was impossible to teach the German knights the principles of true knightliness.

This moral sense even crystallized into rules, made by King John, Richard I, Richard II and Henry V, the latter proclaiming the inviolability of churches, women, children and tillers of the soil. Primitive and incomplete as were these rules, frequently as they must have been disregarded, they marked a definite stirring of conscience, they did much to mitigate the horrors of war. With the Renaissance came a marked advance towards modern practices, rules and regulations. As art developed, as men began to read in printed books, as trade and commerce became honourable occupations, new ideas asserted themselves of the duty of man to man. There was still enough of cruelty and to spare, but men began to protest against it. The excesses of Alva, the treatment of the Indians by the successors of Cortes and Pizarro, the massacre of St. Bartholomew were no longer looked upon as normal incidents; they began to revolt mankind. By tacit agreement the nations relaxed to some extent the rigours of warfare. The regulations of war were extended by the Tudor monarchs, and, as in the American Civil War, so in the struggle between Charles and the Parliament "Laws of War" were drawn up by the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Essex which made it comparatively humane. It came to lose certain of its most abhorrent features, though progress was far from being steady and continuous. There were dreadful exceptions, such as the campaign in the Palatinate and the Thirty Years' War, when cities were sacked and country sides ravaged; but yet the limits beyond which men should not go were being more definitely recognized.

The ending of the Thirty Years' War, with its incredible tale of barbarity, ushered in a milder era. Grotius was witness of its horrors, and was perhaps

moved by them to try to formulate a system of international law. His words, written in 1625, have often been quoted, but may be quoted again in view of recent events:

"I saw prevailing through the Christian world a license in making war of which even barbarous nations would have been ashamed; recourse being had to arms for slight reasons and even for no reasons; and when arms were once taken up, all reverence for human and divine law was thrown away, just as if men were henceforth authorized to commit all crimes without restraint."

The immensity of the evil drove him and others, such as Francisco Suarez, to seek its remedy in an association of States, whose relations would be regulated on well-defined principles. In his doctrine of the Society of Nations, the basic principle of which is that all its members, whatever their disparity of strength, are on equal terms as regards their rights, he broke away from the doctrine of Machiavelli that Might is Right; that no one nation is answerable to another; that each State is the sole judge of its necessity, and is, therefore, free to frame its policy for its own selfish advantage. It is curious to see the controversy, settled two and a half centuries ago, now reopened by the Kaiser, who in this, as in some other respects, might appear to be the natural descendant of the Machiavellian Prince.

If Grotius failed to establish his doctrine in its present completeness, he and those who followed him did at least awaken new ideas of international comity, from which in time came new ideas of international morality. International law can never attain the rigidity of State law for the reason that there is no supreme authority to enforce it, no final sanction for its decrees; but the underlying idea of the Society of Nations was itself an enormous advance. Man-

kind became more sensitive. Distinctions were drawn between what was legitimate and what was illegitimate in war. Pillage, the massacre of non-combatants, needless destruction of property, inhuman neglect of wounded and treatment of prisoners were reprobated by the unfolding instinct of humanity.

The change was slow and it was not progressive. Hard things were done, there were lapses into absolute brutality; but, speaking broadly, with the close of the Thirty Years' War came the end of the old era of warfare with its unrestrained ferocity. The campaigns of William III and Marlborough show a wide departure from the methods of Wallenstein and Tilly sixty years before. The devastation of ruthless warriors, such as Frederick and Napoleon, was rather the inevitable accompaniment of long wars than the premeditated result of barbarity; yet Frederick enjoined on his armies that they must not ill-treat, ravage or destroy civil populations; that non-combatants must be treated with consideration and humanity; while Napoleon avoided the destruction of cities. In a more enlightened day, the Kaiser, under the reproach of mankind, has rejected the precedents set by his own great ancestor and exemplar.

While the practices of war slowly became more lenient, a defined code of warfare still more slowly developed. Great jurists ventilated doctrines which were often in conflict, but all, in one way or another, pushed the claims of morality a little further forward. Von Bynkershoek, though he attempted to soften the austerity of war but little, asserted a great principle when he proclaimed the inviolability of neutral territory. Vattel, again, showed how barbarous war still was in his time by dwelling on the iniquity of the use of poison; but he also proved the progress of

the moral sense when he emphasised the necessity of justice as a cause of war, and declared war to be only justifiable when waged in defence against wrong. Zouche, though he maintained that an abnormal increase of armaments by a neighbouring State would constitute a *casus belli*, was equally positive on the necessity of a war being "rightful"; and declared that there should only be resort to it after all other means of settlement had failed. Leibnitz, Puffendorf and Stowell laid down theoretical principles for a code of War Law, while statesmen and generals in varying degree gave them practical application; but it was not until 1856 that the idea of an international code took definite shape. The Declaration of Paris dealt with the rights of neutral ships in war; asserting the great principles that the neutral flag covers enemy's goods, except such as are contraband of war; and that neutral goods, always excepting contraband of war, are not liable to capture under the enemy flag.

The long period of comparative peace following the Napoleonic wars gave free play to the better feelings of mankind, which found notable expression in the suppression of slavery. In 1864 the Geneva Convention made rules for the treatment of sick and wounded, under which persons and things connected with their care were exempt from hostile operations. In 1868 the Declaration of St. Petersburg established certain general principles of warfare, the chief being that the only legitimate object of military operations was to weaken the force of the enemy, with the minimum of suffering to the civil population. Six years later the laws of war generally were discussed at great length at Brussels. The rules there formulated were not ratified by the Powers; but the agreed principles formed the groundwork of the subsequent negotiations at The Hague in 1899 and 1907.

Although the Brussels Conference had no legislative results, it was of importance as being the reflection of a higher code of morality, which indeed had already found expression in actual warfare. The campaign of Napoleon III in Italy, and the Franco-German War of 1870, while carried on untrammelled by formal regulations, marked on the whole an advance on many previous wars in the observance of humane rules; although, in the latter conflict, the Prussians were guilty of many hideous offences against humanity and justice. The American Civil War had been regulated by a code called "Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field," which certainly influenced the conduct of the Franco-Prussian conflict. It consisted of one hundred and fifty-seven Articles, and was admirable alike in its humanity and completeness, taking from that terrible struggle many of war's worst features. It seemed that of its own determined desire mankind was moving to a higher moral plane. The attempted legislation of 1874 and the actual legislation of 1899 and 1907 were then, as the law-making of primitive States had been, at once the outcome of experience and a growing moral responsibility.

The last two great wars of our time were striking instances of this advance. Both the South African War and the war between Russia and Japan were waged on what may be called the modern principle. There have indeed been military critics who held that the South African methods would have caused less suffering had they been less humane. One thing is certain: never have the inhabitants of an invaded country suffered less from plunder or outrage than did the Boers.

Then came the Russo-Japanese War, waged between two nations whom the Germans have described

as barbarous. The fighting in that campaign was of prodigious fury; the loss of life was very great; the struggle assumed a most violent form; but new rules of warfare were rigidly observed by both sides. Sir Ian Hamilton bears evidence to this admirable behaviour. When he congratulated the Japanese officers on the conduct of their men, they replied, "We cannot afford to have any people connected with this army plundering or ill-treating the inhabitants of the country we traverse." [1] So scrupulous were the Japanese on this point that they actually sacrificed efficiency to secure it. In their war with China they had found that the rickshaw coolies whom they employed, though excellent for transport purposes, had lowered the national reputation by acts of violence and pillage. Accordingly they decided to conscribe 200,000 men annually, not to be called up for military service, but who should act as coolies in time of war. It was calculated that these were only half as efficient as professional coolies, but Japan made the sacrifice in the interest of her own national reputation.

Of the Russians Sir Ian Hamilton writes: "The Muscovites have not lifted so much as an egg even during the demoralization of a defeat." [2] Contrast the conduct of these two nations with what has happened during the months of 1914 and 1915, and we shall be able to measure the ruin of hopes and ideals for which this war is responsible. In those early days of August, 1914, when Europe was roused from its dreams of peace to face the new cataclysm, men consoled themselves as best they could by the reflection that the worst features of war were gone for ever. An authority on international law, writing of

[1] Sir Ian Hamilton, *A Staff Officer's Scrap Book*, Vol. I, p. 244.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

The Hague Conference, had used these soothing words: "Enough has been said to show that war on land is carried on now with far greater humanity than it was a century ago." [3]

He had not said this without reason. The nations involved in the struggle had subscribed to a code the more likely to be observed because it was not based on sentimentalism. Beyond proscribing certain practices, such as murder, poison, and expanding bullets, it left commanders free to use all means of achieving the purpose of war; but it prohibited every act of violence and destruction which was not demanded by the strict purpose of war. It was particular in protecting non-combatants, in asserting the sanctity of private property; and it elevated into law certain customs hitherto resting on an unwritten tradition of honour.[4] There were humanitarians who would have restricted still further the freedom of commanders; but most practical men saw in the very latitude of the code the best security for its observance. To prescribe too many limitations might invite evasions.

Those who expected that the great war of 1914 would be waged on new principles of international morality and law could point, in support of their faith, to a document published so far back as 1902 by the German General Staff, under the title of *Kriegsbrauch*. There is no namby-pamby sentiment in this statement of the rights of war and its practices. War must be made not only on the combatant forces of the enemy State and its fortresses, but "equally strong endeavours must be made to destroy it entire intellectual and material resources." The claims of

[3] T. J. Lawrence, *International Problems and Hague Conference*, p. 104.

[4] For chief provisions of The Hague Convention, see Appendix II.

humanity, the sparing of human lives and property, were to be considered only in so far as the nature of war permitted. This was sufficiently ruthless; but even the authors of that merciless programme recognized limitations of warlike methods, influenced not merely by selfish considerations of reprisals, but by "the spirit of chivalry, of Christian morality and the advance of culture." The modern customs of war, as this document affirms, are not merely founded upon old traditions and ancient military customs, but are "the precipitate of the currents of modern thought."

This was all very consoling. Here were men of blood and iron admitting the influence of chivalry, culture and Christian morality; and asserting that the customs of modern war reflect modern thought. The Second Hague Conference carried the results of modern thought a little further, and Germany subscribed to its conclusions. We were, therefore, entitled to look for something of a moral lesson in the conduct of this war.

So great, indeed, was the refinement of the conflict to be, that we find the German General Staff deprecating the employment of non-European troops, whom they regarded as uncivilized and barbarian. The objection is stated in a fine passage:

> "With the modern tendency to humanize warfare and to diminish the sufferings caused by war, the employment of soldiers who lack the knowledge of civilized warfare, and who consequently perpetrate cruelties and inhumanities prohibited by the customs of war cannot be reconciled."

What then are these customs of war which a barbarous and uncivilized soldiery might disregard, but which would be respected by even the most ruthless commander of white men?

Dealing with sieges and bombardments, it is laid down by the German General Staff in the *Kriegsbrauch* that the prohibition against shelling open towns and villages neither occupied nor defended by the enemy is, " Almost superfluous, as the modern history of war scarcely knows a case in which such shelling has taken place."

Memories of Whitby and Scarborough will vividly intrude themselves here.

Ruses of War.—

Although in all times tricks and ruses have been considered lawful, it is explained that —

" Certain ruses are not reconcilable with honest warfare, namely, those which degenerate into perfidy, fraud, and the breach of the given word."

In this category are placed the abuse of the white flag or the Red Cross and pretended surrender with the object of killing an unsuspecting opponent on his approach. Such offences are denounced in terms which deserve to be remembered —

" These crimes violate the most ancient principles of war. The natural sense of right possessed by all men, and the spirit of chivalry which lives in the armies of all civilized States have branded such proceedings as crimes against humanity and against Right, and, guided by these sentiments, one refuses to recognize any longer as equals, opponents who thus openly violate the laws of honour and justice."

It is also laid down that, in the opinion of military writers, supported by The Hague Conference, the use of the enemy's uniform and flags, or of neutral flags, in order to deceive, is placed in the same category as the abuse of the white flag and the Red Cross. Yet these pious affirmations have been repudiated in practice innumerable times during this war by the German army.

Customs of War relating to the enemy's country. Rights and duties of inhabitants.—

On this point the *Kriegsbrauch* is so admirable in its statement of international morality that it must be quoted at length:

"While formerly the opinion prevailed that the destruction of private property was 'the principal means of warfare,' and that the right to plunder private property was unlimited, to-day the opinion prevails universally that the inhabitants of a hostile country are no longer to be considered as enemies. . . . It follows that the citizens of an unoccupied country possess the *right,* that neither their life may be taken nor that their honour and liberty be diminished, that every case of unlawful killing of the civil population, that every malicious or careless wounding, that every insult, every disturbance of the domestic peace, every attack upon the family, upon honour, and upon morality, in short, every unlawful or criminal attack and insult is exactly as punishable as if it had been perpetrated against the inhabitants of one's own country."

Here we pause to think of Visé, Louvain, Termonde, and Malines; of Aerschot, Dinant and Senlis!

In regard to private property the *Kriegsbrauch* is quite definite. As war is made between States and not between private individuals, it follows that arbitrary devastation of the country and wilful destruction of private property is opposed to international law. Soldiers guilty of unnecessary devastation, destruction and arson "will be punished as criminals according to law." Then follows this declaration in all the emphasis of italics.

"No damage, not even the smallest, must be done unless it is done for military reasons. On the other hand, the greatest damage may be inflicted if it is demanded by the conduct of war."

How many towns and villages in France and Bel-

gium have been laid waste for no reason at all save to feed a spirit of revenge and hatred, to impose the policy of terrorism, to paralyse the material and intellectual resources of the people!

Plunder and loot.—

Observe the good doctrine of the German General Staff on this ancient offence of war:

"Plunder is the worst form of taking other people's property. It consists in robbing the citizens of the country by making use of the terror of war, in abusing the superior force possessed by the military."

This is a most important statement. The taking of all private property is criminal, but the addition of terror makes it atrocious. Such a denunciation of terrorism, or frightfulness, must not be forgotten as we proceed to consider what has happened in Belgium and Northern France.

Forced Requisitions and Contributions.—

"As modern International Law no longer recognizes the right to destroy and plunder, and as the maxim that wars are made upon States, and not upon private individuals is no longer in doubt, it follows logically that forced contributions in money are not permissible according to present-day views, because such contributions represent only an ordinary enrichment of the victor."

Here we have an exposition of the principles on which nations should fight, elevating warfare to a comparatively high moral plane. It is not perfect; the doctrine of the destruction of a nation's entire resources, not only material but intellectual, shocks civilized ideals; but the denunciation of dishonest ruses; the emphatic assertion of the inviolability of the persons and property of private individuals; the condemnation of the principles of ransom; the lofty

appeals to chivalry, Christianity and honour — these indicate a very notable advance in civilization.

Truly, thought those who read, we were coming to a golden military age, when war would be conducted in a kind of vacuum, injuring only those engaged in it and passing non-combatants by. These hopeful expectations were confounded when Germany violated the neutrality of Luxemburg and Belgium; for that neutrality was not only guaranteed by solemn treaty upheld over three-quarters of a century, but was sanctified by The Hague Conference and by the German General Staff itself. Thoughtful men, when they saw these articles of international law disregarded, may have had some qualms of doubt whether the others would be observed; if so they were lulled into tranquillity by the conviction that though Germany might disregard a political obligation, she would certainly not disregard obligations of chivalry, honour, and Christian morality.

They saw in the *Kriegsbrauch* commendable opposition of new principles of morality to old barbarous practices; and they fondly imagined that humanity had really weighted the balance in its own favour. They were mistaken. They had read only the lofty sentiments and well-posed regulations; they had ignored the exceptions and the qualifications. In that admirable work, *The German War-Book*,[5] Professor Morgan has shown the distinction made by the German War Lords between *Kriegsmanier*, or the rules of war, and *Kriegsraison*, or the argument of necessity of war; and how the former is invariably subordinated to the latter. "It is," he says, "unfortunate that the *War-Book*, when it inculcates

[5] Those who desire to study the German conception of warfare in detail will find in this work a very complete statement of the subject.

'frightfulness,' is never obscure, and when it advises forbearance it is always ambiguous."

In effect, the German rules of war are not really framed in mitigation of old bad usages; they are everywhere whittled down in deference to them. The Ten Commandments are hung on the wall, and then are blue-pencilled till "Thou shalt not" is obscured by "Thou mayst." In brief, the German *War-Book,* if the exceptions be taken with the rules, is an actual repudiation of the modern practice of war as declared by The Hague Convention. The latter seeks by rules to put restraints on the doctrine of destruction; in the *War-Book* this doctrine modifies, distorts, governs, or obscures the rules. So flagrant, indeed, is the antagonism in spirit between the two, that it is certain the authors of the *Kriegsbrauch* had no other object than to throw dust in the eyes of the world, to make mock of humanity. The German General Staff had its tongue in its cheek when this *War-Book* was compiled.

What we have seen in actual practice since August, 1914, is no less than the betrayal of civilization by the very nation which, like one who went out and hanged himself, was most correct in its professions of loyalty to culture and morality. It has been a terrible blow to the whole world to find how little, after all, has been the ethical progress of Germany, how thin its veneer of refinement and humanity.

However, now that the first shock has passed, reflection will serve to show that humanity need not be hopeless, face to face with this revolting history. The very horror which the deeds done in Flanders, in France and in Poland, have aroused everywhere, prove that the moral progress of the world of men as a whole is a real thing; that it is only one tribe of

the vast human family which has failed and fallen short. The conduct of the war by Germany, her repudiation of the principles which she herself professed, has lowered the moral level as a whole; but it has at least shown us exactly where the foundations are rotten.

There had been warnings by those who knew, who declared from inside knowledge that the German people, like the *parvenus* of romance, had lost their heads. When a German officer butchered a peaceful unarmed citizen, or a sergeant tortured and maltreated his men, or someone who knew published revelations of life in a garrison town; or when an enterprising journalist unearthed the loathsome doings of a camarilla, people shook their heads, but dismissed the matter, with the remark that militarism was being pushed too far; that there was, unhappily, still a certain crudeness, coarseness and cruelty in the German character. With thought of the Heinrichs and the Gretchens of such German literature as they knew, they were glad to believe still that the nation was sound at heart. Even a most distinguished Englishman, a deep student of Germany, found there his "intellectual home." If, with his reading, he failed to appreciate the real trend of German character and feeling, it is not surprising that less favoured and less instructed people were ignorant of what was forward.

Germany alone has not marched with the rest of humanity, save in material development, in the progress of commerce and industry, in the getting of wealth. While most of the world has been seeking higher inspiration, becoming slowly subject to principles which work towards the adjustment of all disorganization of world-life by equity and right-thinking, by mutual moral accommodation, she has wor-

shipped false gods. "In the struggle between nationalities," cries Prince Bülow, "one nation is the hammer and the other the anvil."

Germans call the God they worship their "old God," but in vain the studious mind seeks this German Deity in the story of civilization. True it is, however, that in the operas of Wagner he may be found. There he is in the subterranean realms where Wotan reigned. A German poet has sung of him in wild ecstasy:

"The God who speaks out of our cannons, the God who breaks up your fortresses, who rushes through the seas on our ships, who whizzes across the heavens with our flying-men, the God of our swords before which you tremble, is the same Almighty Spirit that has moved over Germany for thousands of years. He was Wotan, the cloud-wanderer of our fathers; it was he who suffered with us, but who remained alive in Paul Gerhardt and John Sebastian Bach, the God who lay beside Frederick in the field, and finally gave us a new day."[6]

Too long have this German race misinterpreted the Deity for their purposes of conquest; too long have they drawn inspiration from Askalon, forgetting or scorning Olivet. Tacitus, no unfriendly critic, says of the Germans of his day, "To solicit by labour what might be seized by arms was esteemed unworthy of the German spirit."

The German race has always been pre-eminent for barbarity in war. Germany's conquests have largely been barren because of the brutality of her methods. Her idea of making Italy a province of the Empire was to devastate it; the Thirty Years' War was perhaps the most horrible in its excesses of all that have stained the face of Europe since the time of Attila.[7]

[6] *Kölnische Zeitung*, December, 1914.

[7] John Ruskin bore indignant testimony to German violence. Thus, in *Fors Clavigera*, he says: "Accordingly, when the Germans

We need only compare it with the contemporary great Civil War in England to realize what were the excesses of the old Teutons. During the campaigns in France, in 1814 and 1815, the atrocities of the Prussian troops shocked their allies, who were not squeamish or over-sensitive. At Chateau Thierry, in 1814, the Prussians "committed every sort of cruelty."[8] When General Belliaud, of the French Army, entered the town, he found the women killing the wounded Prussians, and was told that it was an act of vengeance for wholesale plunder, outrage on women of all ages, and cold-blooded murder. Captain Gronow, describing what happened in the advance to Paris after Waterloo, says: "Whenever we arrived at towns or villages through which the Prussians had passed we found that every article of furniture in the houses had been destroyed in the most wanton fashion"; and he describes how, on the slightest remonstrance, the poor people were "beaten in a most shameful manner and sometimes shot." This officer found a farmer at Pont St. Maixan, whose three daughters had been violated, whose cattle and horses had been stolen, and who had himself been tied to a chair and slashed with swords because he had no money. One greater than Gronow bore similar witness. Robert Southey thus describes a visit to Belgium in the autumn of 1815:

"You will be rejoiced to hear that the English are well spoken of for their deportment in peace and war. It is far

get command of Lombardy, they bombard Venice, steal her pictures (which they can't understand a single touch of), and entirely ruin the country, morally and physically, leaving behind them misery, vice, and intense hatred of themselves, wherever their accursed feet have trodden. They do precisely the same thing by France—crush her, rob her, leave her in misery of rage and shame, and return home, smacking their lips, and singing Te Deums."

[8] Captain Gronow's *Reminiscences.*

otherwise with the Prussians. Concerning them there is but one opinion; of their brutality and intolerable insolence I have had but too many proofs." [9]

In Paris the ruffianism of the Prussians revolted the Allies. Blucher was with difficulty restrained by the Duke of Wellington from plundering the Bank of France. General Müffling put an impossible contribution on the city and arrested the Prefect because it could not be paid.[10] British objection to such treatment of a conquered country caused differences which were not easily overcome.

The Duke of Wellington had no illusion as to the character of his Allies. Though he earned the title of the "Iron Duke," he was always scrupulous to respect the rights of non-combatants, as the bad men of his armies learned to their cost; and the disregard of these rights by the Germans revolted him. Writing to his mother, he thus described the operations of the German legion:

"I can assure you that from the General of the Germans down to the smallest drummer-boy in their legion the earth never groaned with such a lot of murdering infamous villains. They murdered, robbed, and ill-treated the peasantry wherever they went."

The Iron Duke did not speak more strongly than he felt. He was unrelentingly stern with his own armies, punishing ill-treatment of non-combatants with the utmost severity. Sir Herbert Maxwell, in his life of the great commander, says:

"Plundering of peaceful inhabitants was the one crime he detested and was determined to put down."

In the Danish War of 1864 the German army de-

[9] Robert Southey, Letter to John May, October 6th, 1815.
[10] Captain Gronow, *Reminiscences*.

stroyed public works, monuments and property of all kinds without scruple, and without any excuse of military advantage. Thus, they bombarded Sondeburg, a town situated on an island behind the Danish forces, which was quite outside the area of military operations, the only result of the bombardment being the removal of the Danish hospitals. When their excesses in the Franco-German War of 1870 formed the subject of general discussion, the Austrian papers declared that, short as had been the campaign of 1866, the German armies had left behind them in Austria the same unsavoury reputation as in Denmark. This is peculiarly instructive, for Austria had borne part in both campaigns, in one as the ally, in the other as the opponent, of Prussia.

In the Franco-Prussian War, there was, as we have it now, the theory of collective punishment, the destruction of public buildings, and the same callous disregard of the wounded, though on a less extensive scale. The shelling of the inhabited quarters of Strassburg before even a shot was fired against the ramparts; the destruction of the great library that lay beside the historic Cathedral; and the deliberate bombardment of the place, to prevent the work of those who tried to save it, was sternly condemned in England and America as were the indiscriminate murders in revenge for the attacks of the *francs-tireurs* and General von Goeben's atrocious Proclamation at Rouen, where those who acted as guides to the French troops were threatened with death.[11]

The conduct of the German armies in 1870 is particularly instructive in examining the excuse advanced by the Germans for the destruction of towns and slaughter of civilians in Belgium. Then, as now,

[11] Laurence Oliphant, the correspondent of the London *Times* in this war, said that "The Germans pillaged terribly."

the argument was that civilians had become irregular combatants. We need not here argue the question whether the *francs-tireurs* were not as much regular soldiers as the Landstrum of Germany. High authorities contend that they were; but that point may pass in view of the fact that towns were destroyed and civilians butchered in reprisal for the acts of regular troops. At Nemours, where 300 *gardes-mobiles* captured 47 Uhlans, the sentence on the town was that it should be pillaged for two hours and burned to the ground. When a bridge over the Meuse was destroyed by a party of French cavalry, which came from a distance, the unoffending village of Fontenoi near by was ravaged and burnt by the Germans. On December 6th, 1870, a party of Germans came to Nogent-le-Roi to make requisitions, and was driven off by *gardes-mobiles*. They came again, with 7,000 men, after the French forces had retired, and gallantly bombarded the undefended town, setting it on fire and slaying the townsfolk as they escaped from their burning homes.

Later still, in the Chinese War of 1900, the German troops took to heart the injunctions of their Emperor against mercy. General James H. Wilson, who commanded the American contingent, has testified that "The atrocities perpetrated by the Germans, especially as regards women, were something too atrocious for record; and, moreover, were unblushingly acknowledged as a regular feature of war."

Cruelty is one of the methods of instruction in the German army. Soldiers are thrashed by their sergeants, horses are flogged till they shriek with pain. Persuasion, kindness, humanity, play little part in educational methods; force is the real remedy, the chief agent. The design is to harden the army;

and it is notably achieved. The soldier becomes a superman, taught to roll his eye in scorn and defiance, to look for causes of offence and promptly to avenge them. Brutality becomes part of his regular equipment. He carries it in his haversack, as convenient for his sustenance as his emergency ration. Thus, we find officers performing daring feats of swordsmanship upon unarmed merchants and even cripples, and the heir to the throne complimenting the victors of Zabern on their loyalty to the honour of the army.

William Harbutt Dawson, a profound student of German life and character, in his latest volume,[12] describes with graphic force the system of cruelty and persecution by non-commissioned officers in the German army, citing speeches made in debates in the Reichstag on Army Estimates, wherein charges are made "with monotonous regularity." He quotes striking and revolting instances such as that of a sergeant named Thamm, who was charged with 600 cases of misconduct and maltreatment; of a captain, under whom a non-commissioned officer had committed 1,500 offences of illtreatment of soldiers, being given promotion over the heads of senior officers; and he recalls the statement made in the Reichstag that within a period of five years, "One hundred thousand court-martialled soldiers had been sentenced to an aggregate period of 2,300 years of penal servitude and 16,000 years of imprisonment." What the condition of an army must be which has been obliged to court-martial 100,000 soldiers in five years; what the spirit of revolt against the cruelty of the system must have been which resulted in 100,000 soldiers receiving 18,300 years of imprisonment and penal servitude may be imagined. How slavish

[12] *What is Wrong with Germany?*

must the spirit of a people be which could permit such a system to continue!

"Kicks, cuffings, pulling of ears till the blood came, and lashings with driving whips were among the ordinary means employed by these brutes to enforce discipline, and 'waken up' backward men."

This is the description of the ordinary course of discipline. How long would a free people like those of England and America endure this degradation of humanity, this savage application of physical torture to produce an efficient machine for the imposition of *Kultur* and the saving grace of the German ideal? These things are done in the twentieth century by the military section of a people who have that people in such control that their civilization is resolved back again into barbarism at the crack of the Junker's whip of discipline. A nation that can sing a Song of Hate like a troop of Sioux Indians on the war-path, as though, when this war is over, we shall not have commerce again with each other, or resume the ordinary exchanges and civilities of existence, shows a primeval simplicity and an aboriginal emotion which is as discomfiting to the intelligence as it is futile in effect:

> . . . "Come hear the word, repeat the word,
> Throughout the Fatherland make it heard,
> We will never forego our hate,
> We have all but a single hate,
> We love as one, we hate as one,
> We have one foe, and one alone—
> *England!*"

The German Dr. Fuchs, in a book on the subject of preparedness for war, says:

"Therefore the German claim of the day must be: The family to the front. The State has to follow at first in the

school, then in foreign politics. Education to hate. Education to the estimation of hatred. Organization of hatred. Education to the desire of hatred. Let us abolish unripe and false shame before brutality and fanaticism. We must not hesitate to announce: To us is given faith, hope and hatred, but hatred is the greatest among them."

It is all childish, ridiculous and disconcerting. It is a nation in the tantrums, a giant crashing about and blaspheming the mockers whom he cannot reach or destroy. It is the abdication of sane manhood and of all that civilization has given of self-control. As Goethe said to Eckermann: "Natural hatred is a peculiar thing. You will find it most intense among the lowest in the scale of civilization." Who cares a fig or a farthing for these ravings? They do not frighten us; they but give assurance that hate will drive these tigers rampant to do foolish things, by which they will play into our hands, as they have done in this war again and again. They kill the wounded and fire upon Red Cross ambulances and hospitals; they loot and murder and rape and rob, and their hate has thus much hideous fruition; but it does not give added strength, or skill or wisdom to their fighting. It sends General von Hindenburg headlong at the crafty Russians in a fury that overwhelms the makers of fury; it throws scores of thousands on impregnable places to die; it burns towns and kills women and children and old men in baffled rage. It drives Admiral von Tirpitz to proclaim paper-blockades and the intention of remorselessly destroying Great Britain's mercantile marine without regard for the lives of the non-combatants on the ships destroyed. It sends a whole nation plunging blindly down slopes whose depths are hidden, in the spirit of Cromwell's words to the Portuguese Ambassador: "No one goes so far as he who knows

not where he is going." What can you do with a people whose salutation to each other is —

> "God punish England, brother! —
> Yea, punish her, O Lord!"

They say it, they sing it, and they hiss it. They beat a poor wounded prisoner, they spit upon him, they strike him in the face with bayonets, they kick him when he asks for water, they surround him at a railway-station to the summons of, "Come and see the English swine!"[13] They apparently forget that there are German prisoners in England, and that it is possible to swarm upon wounded German prisoners at English railway-stations, and beat them and kick them and say, "Come and see the German hogs." Truth is, far too many of the German people are still in many essentials where they were when they hunted the wild boar in the forests of Zollern, or tracked down their wild brethren, the Slavs, in the barren plains of East Prussia, "with a single hate" and "one foe alone" ages and ages ago.

An able writer,[14] who knows Germany and its people, points out how the Kaiser contributes to the doctrine of force by his constant praise of the duelling methods of the German students. It is all a piece of the great idea — contempt for weakness, disregard of the rights of others, the principle of hacking one's way through. The German cannot understand that other men have any rights, any point of view, any virtue, unless they jump with his advantage. He cannot greatly love his friends, even those like the Danes, whom he wronged, and from whom

[13] Corporal C. Welton of the 1st Cheshire Regiment, in an interview in the London Press on his return from Germany after imprisonment there.

[14] Mr. Sidney Whitman, *Nineteenth Century*, December, 1914.

he took by force territory and population; or the Austrians, whom he lures to be his servants and treats like members of a "contemptible little army." All others he hates, or hides his hate seeking to seduce. People have been amazed at the coarse vituperation filling the German papers since the present war began. It should not cause surprise; it is the Teutonic custom. Mr. Gallenga, a one-time lover of Germany, in his account of the Danish War of 1864, uses language which might be reprinted to describe the events of to-day:

"It is strange to see how bitter, how violent these Germans can be when they have managed to lash themselves into a passion. It is not the Government of Denmark only that is the theme of their withering abuse. It is the Danish people that they paint with the most odious colours as the falsest, the most treacherous, the most hypocritical people in the world. They do not scruple to charge their adversaries with the blackest perfidy and duplicity." [15]

There are, doubtless, very many kindly Germans who deplore these things, but they are silent or disregarded. They are over-ruled by those who hold that such a spirit is incompatible with national greatness. They see that other nations have become great by milder methods, but their arguments are addressed to rulers devoid of political capacity and

[15] The hostility of the Germans to the English is by no means of recent growth. In a letter from France, written in 1870, Laurence Oliphant describes their animosity thus: "The official or Junker class detests England with a mortal hatred, because they instinctively feel that the institutions of England strike at the root of their class prejudices and bureaucratic system. The feeling against England among the Germans is increasing every day, and it is amusing to hear them discuss plans for the invasion of England. They have worked the whole thing out; Blumenthal told me he had considered it from every point of view, and regarded it as quite feasible."

controlled by atavistic tendencies. "We must conquer or die, we must fight for what we want," they say. Against that creed remonstrance beats in vain. The milder, manlier school of thought has lost, not only in influence but in numbers. Prince Bülow, in his notable book, describing quite frankly the conflict between the old German intellectual life and the Prussian State, says:

"My late friend, Adolph Wilbrandt, in a pleasing play, has a scene between an official belonging to the North German nobility and the daughter of a savant of the middle classes. At first they repel each other and quarrel. 'I represent the Germany of Schiller, Goethe and Lessing,' says the woman, and the man replies: 'And I represent the Germany of Bismarck, Blücher and Moltke' . . . Our future depends on whether, and to what extent, we succeed in amalgamating German intellect with the Prussian monarchy."

Militarism has eaten deeply and ravenously into the national conscience of Germany; the nation is prone before an army of little despots living inside a ring-fence which no echo of the old German thought and sentiment penetrates. The men of this army must, however, have credit for what they are — splendid fighting animals, from whom all but the primal fighting instinct has been sedulously crushed out.

Of such "factors of control" was Germany composed in the summer of 1914. Its people — some of them unseeing and unwitting — made worship in secret at a new shrine, while outwardly maintaining the observances of the orthodox faith of international honour. On our part we were ignorant, blinded by a great duplicity, and dumbfounded at last by the real truth. We have realized in a day of unexpected sacrifice what the great German historian

meant when he wrote of "The childish belief, that civilization is able to extirpate brutality from human nature." [16]

[16] Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. I, p. 404.

CHAPTER XVII

"FRIGHTFULNESS"

MANKIND has been sickened by the excesses committed by the German armies wherever they have gone, and this, less by the revolting deeds themselves, than by the fact that they have been the outcome of deliberate war-policy.

Individual atrocities are committed in every war, since in all armies savage natures find a natural *habitat*. Military service attracts them because of the opportunity offered of loot, lust, and killing. No army can guard against such devilry, but great soldiers like Wellington have sternly punished the author of the individual atrocity. This incidental — and because human nature is what it is — inevitable, accident of warfare is wholly distinct from the policy of official organized atrocity such as Germany has pursued during the present war. The Kaiser and his government have declared officially, and Count Reventlow, Professor Lasson, and many others unofficially, that the policy of Germany was to produce in the minds of the enemy people an effect of terror and demoralization; that there should be destruction, not only of the material but of the intellectual life of the nation, by which is undoubtedly meant its *morale*, will-power, and spiritual capacity for resistance. That has been the official war-policy carefully developed and systematically, ruthlessly, and viciously applied.

The doctrine of frightfulness is not a new one, but its adoption by a civilized nation as a settled policy is wholly new. In old days it was the normal char-

acteristic of war, because war had no limitations. No nice distinctions were made between the military and civil populations, between public and private property; no bounds were set to the privileges of the victor over the vanquished. Humanity still execrates the names of Attila and Tamerlane, and we, in modern days, stand aghast at the deeds of King Prempeh, of Chaka the Zulu, and of Lobengula; but these murderers, and others like them, did not invent such methods of warfare; they did not prescribe them as an essential part of their military scheme; they took things as they were, following the customs and moral standards of days, and in regions, which knew no *Kultur*. Because those standards were low we call them barbarians and savages.

Germany, however, has sinned against the light; she has been false to her own solemn engagements; she has given the lie to her own professions; she has betrayed the moral sense of her age; she has undone the work of the centuries. Of all the many counts in the indictment against her, this last is the most grievous, that she has ignored the spirit of civilized warfare. Rules and customs, Geneva Conventions and Hague Conferences avail nothing unless the spirit of the combatants conforms to them. Valueless in themselves, since no power exists to enforce them, they depend for their validity on the consciences of the signatories. It may, indeed, almost be said that, unless all the signatories are equally loyal to them, they may be worse than useless, by encouraging those who disregard them to trust to the higher feelings of others for their own escape from reprisals. Those, for example, who sacked Louvain and ravaged Rheims may hope that no provocation would induce the annihilation of Heidelberg or the destruction of Cologne by the Allies.

Had these lapses occurred under extreme pressure of military necessity, as in a last desperate effort to escape defeat; or even had they been inspired by the wild justice of revenge, they would still have been unpardonable, for the restraints of public law are devised to check such hideous license and passion of brutality. The recent crimes of Germany against humanity, however, have none of these palliations. Her atrocities began when the war began; they were at their height when her forces were "plunging down the path of victory." The plea advanced that it was all in accordance with the military law of reprisals will be examined later in detail: here it is sufficient to say that long before 1914 Germany had adopted the doctrine of frightfulness in war, though it was hoped that the concert of civilization would restrain her in this epoch of the world's life. The following precept, often erroneously attributed to Bismarck, reflects fairly the underlying principles of the German *War-Book:*

"True strategy consists in hitting your enemy, and hitting him hard. . . . Above all, you must inflict on the inhabitants of invaded towns the maximum of suffering, so that they may become sick of the struggle and may bring pressure on their Government to discontinue it. You must leave the people through whom you march only their eyes to weep with."

No one will quarrel with the first sentence in this pronouncement. Against the armed enemy ruthless vigour is necessary, and it may in the end be the truest humanity; though even against the armed enemy limits have been set which have been callously disregarded by Germany. The German war-maker, however, is not content with this. The civil population, the old men, the women and children are to be harried, tortured, robbed of all but their tear-

wet eyes, so that their Government may be induced to surrender. Cruelty is to achieve what valour alone might fail to win. This monstrous doctrine is the negation of all human progress. It revives principles which revolted mankind centuries ago. Shakespeare, whom Germany now claims as her own, puts words into the mouth of Henry V, which express the Elizabethan, and indeed the Plantagenet, idea of war. Hearing that Bardolph was "like to be hanged for robbing a church," the King says:

"We would have all such offenders so cut off; and we give express charge, that in our marches through the country there be nothing compelled from the villagers, nothing taken but paid for, none of the French upbraided or abused in disdainful language; for when lenity and cruelty play for a Kingdom, the gentler gamester is the truest winner." [1]

The modern War Lords of Germany will have no chivalrous sentiments such as these. Field Marshal von der Goltz expounded the Teutonic war-policy when he declared that the only unpardonable sin is failure, and that, "inexorable and seemingly hideous callousness are among the attributes necessary to him who would achieve great things in war." In similar manner Von Moltke, in his correspondence with Professor Bluntschli, denounced the doctrine that the object of war is simply to weaken the enemy's military strength. In the *Kriegsbrauch,* wherein the German General Staff lays down war-rules for the German forces, this view is upheld. There are plenty of admirable rules (as given in a previous chapter), sentiments which would do honour to Joseph Surface, but they are flanked and outnumbered by exceptions. Professor Lüder, an eminent international jurist, lends legal authority to the German General Staff, when he qualifies the humanizing

[1] *Henry V,* Act III, Scene 6.

doctrine of war usage by emphasizing " the terrorism so often necessary in war." [2] The whole Germanic theory of warfare, indeed, is permeated by the doctrines of Clausewitz, who denounced magnanimity and benevolence as a fatal error, and declared it to be an absurdity " to introduce a principle of moderation into the philosophy of war."

Such doctrines are incompatible with the international rules regulating warfare, and it is a singular and significant fact that the *Kriegsbrauch,* issued for the guidance of the German army, does not include the Hague Regulations, as does the British *Manual of Military Law.* Germany, in fact, is her own law-maker, and will have no public law. Though she set her hand to The Hague Convention, it was clearly with the secret reservation that its august rules must be subordinated to her own rules which she would make during the course of war. In effect, no law is recognized save that of the " good German conscience," so loudly extolled in the German Press, and to which Baron Marschall von Bieberstein appealed at the Hague Conference, when he refused to accept Great Britain's proposals for restricting the use of marine mines. As things stand, conscience is the only sanction of international law; but when conscience itself knows no rules or limitations, when it stretches to meet every necessity real or imaginary, what then? Well, then we have what we have — " red ruin and the breaking up of laws."

There are three tribunals before which Germany can be arraigned — her own *Kriegsbrauch,* the Society of Nations, and Humanity. She cannot dispute the competency of any one of them to hear the case, for she herself has constructed the first; and

[2] Holtzendorff's *Handbuch des Volkerrechts,* IV, 378.

since the war began she has appealed to the other two, in regard to bombardment of open towns, the use of dum-dum bullets and the stoppage of food supplies. She is, therefore, placed in this dilemma: if she acknowledges The Hague Convention, she pleads guilty; if she does not, she places herself outside the law of nations, and must submit to be treated as a barbarian country. But, in framing the indictment, let it once more be made clear, that the charge against Germany is not alone that rules have been broken and humanity outraged as that these things have been done according to a settled official policy of terrorism.

Take, for example, the bombardment of open and undefended towns, forbidden both by The Hague Convention and by the *Kriegsbrauch*. The law is quite plain, and it does not err on the side of mercy. Fortresses and strong places may always be attacked; open towns, villages and houses may be bombarded when occupied or used for military purposes. When fortresses are bombarded, the bombardment may extend to the whole town,— though the humane commander would naturally avoid that if possible — but churches, schools, libraries, and the like must be spared so far as may be. In no case, however, may hospitals be bombarded. How Germany has obeyed these rules is now known to all the world. Give her the benefit of the doubt, wherever doubt is possible, she still is damnably guilty. It is clear that at Ypres, Arras and Rheims, not only was no care taken to spare historic buildings, but such splendid monuments as the Cathedral, the Cloth Hall and the Markets were made especial targets. If it may be pleaded that discrimination in long-range fire is difficult, and that these cities were involved in military operations, no such plea can be advanced

for the bombardment of Scarborough, Whitby, Yarmouth and the Norfolk villages. Unfortified, unoccupied by armed forces, the attack upon them was wanton, murderous, and served no military purpose whatever.

The sanctity of hospitals has been constantly violated. The Cathedral of Rheims was not only a Church, it sheltered wounded men, some of whom perished in the attack. As offensive to all human feeling also was the deliberate attempt made to torpedo the hospital ship *Asturias* on February 2nd, 1915, near Havre, although she bore all the signs of her calling — the white hull, the green band, the Red Cross of Geneva. Germany made a futile apology for this business many weeks after the event, when public opinion in neutral countries was roused and sternly reproachful. The explanation was that the *Asturias* carried no distinctive lights and that in the dusk of a February evening (5 P. M.) her markings could not be distinguished.

The apology is as lame as it was belated and untrue. It was a very light and clear evening, and at 5.15 broad daylight, and in no possibility could the character of the ship be mistaken. It was possible to trace the track of the torpedo four hundred yards away.[8] But even had it some foundation, does it reduce the guilt of the would-be murderer that, meaning to kill Smith, he fires at Jones, without taking pains to be sure of the identity? To sink a peaceful vessel without warning and without any care for the passengers and crew was contrary to international law and sheer murder. That a civilized nation should permit or condone such deeds is saddening and depressing. It never seems to occur to Germany that without superior sea-power we are in a

[8] Admiralty statement, Feb. 13th, 1915.

position to make reprisals of a staggering nature, if we are so minded. She appears to think, however, that we have not the courage for reprisals. She regards every exhibition of magnanimity as a sign of weakness, as an appeal for less violence on her part. That the Admiralty should at last take action to show that the British navy was revolted by the German navy's disregard of the rules of war did something to restore British self-respect. It refused the honours of war to the officers and crew of submarine U8 for having torpedoed and sunk in the English Channel unarmed merchantmen carrying non-combatants, neutrals and women.[4]

On August 22nd, 1914, the 47th Regiment of German Infantry entered the village of Gomery in Belgium. The officer in command went to the hos-

[4] On the 8th of March, 1915, the Admiralty made the following announcement: "Since the war began, His Majesty's ships have on every occasion done their utmost to rescue from the sea German officers and men whose vessels have been sunk, and more than 1,000 have been saved, often in circumstances of difficulty and danger, although no such treatment has ever yet been shown to British sailors in similar distress. The officers and men thus taken prisoners have received the treatment appropriate to their rank and such courtesies as the service allows; and in the case of the *Emden* were accorded the honours of war. The Board of Admiralty do not, however, feel justified in extending honourable treatment to the twenty-nine officers and men rescued from submarine U8. This vessel has been operating in the Straits of Dover and the English Channel during the last few weeks, and there is strong probability that she has been guilty of attacking and sinking unarmed merchantmen and firing torpedoes at ships carrying non-combatants, neutrals, and women. In particular, the s.s. *Oriole* is missing, and there is grave reason to fear she was sunk at the beginning of February with all hands — twenty. There is of course great difficulty in bringing home particular crimes to any individual German submarine, and it may be that the evidence necessary to establish a conviction will not be obtained until after the conclusion of peace. In the meantime, persons against whom such charges are pending must be the subject of special restriction, cannot be accorded the distinctions of their rank, or be allowed to mingle with other prisoners of war."

pital, asked for an interpreter, and shot the ambulance officer as soon as he appeared. He then led his men into the hospital, killed the surgeons and the wounded, and burned the hospital and the village to the ground. That was one way of insulting humanity; but ingenuity found another. At Vilvorde, on August 25th, the Germans abused the sanctity of the Red Cross by hoisting its flag over their barracks to secure the safety of their soldiers. Yet even the indulgent *Kriegsbrauch* declares abuse of the Red Cross to be so vile as to place the guilty party outside the pale of honourable men.

At sea the conduct of the war by Germany has been marked by persistent disregard of the rules and the spirit of modern warfare. She has from the beginning been reckless and remorseless in the use of mines, though at The Hague Conference in 1907 Marschall von Bieberstein said that, "A belligerent who lays mines assumes a very heavy responsibility towards neutrals and peaceful navigation." So strongly did the sense of this responsibility press on the British delegates that they protested against the rules adopted as being inadequate for the protection of neutrals or to satisfy humanitarian sentiments. Their statement merits quotation:

"The high seas are an international high road. If in the present state of international law and custom belligerents are permitted to carry on their quarrels there, it is none the less incumbent upon them to do nothing which could, long after their departure from the spot, render this high road dangerous for neutrals who have an equal right to use it. We declare without hesitation that the rights of neutrals to safety in the navigation of the high seas ought to prevail over the temporary rights of belligerents to make use of them as a place for operations of war."

Having pointed out how far short of this object

the Convention fell, the British spokesman concluded:

"It follows that one must not assume that such and such a proceeding is legitimate merely because the Convention does not prohibit it. This is a principle which we make a point of, and one which cannot be neglected by any State, however great be its power."

This statement, which effectually answers the accusation now so freely made, that Great Britain claims the right to close the neighbouring waters against the world and to make the North Sea *mare clausum*, will receive general assent. Germany, however, not only dissented from these principles at the time, but she has grossly and continuously broken the Convention since. She has violated Article 1, forbidden unanchored automatic contact mines which would not become harmless within an hour of being laid; or the use of anchored contact mines which would not become harmless as soon as they broke loose. She has violated Article 2, prohibiting the laying of automatic contact mines off the enemy's coast and ports with the view of intercepting vessels of commerce; and she has not, in compliance with Article 3, taken any precautions for the security of peaceful shipping. She has never — except in regard to her new paper-blockade, in which all neutral shipping is to suffer — notified the danger zones to mariners, or directed the attention of the various Governments to them through diplomatic channels, as required by the Convention, save in such general terms as to nullify the intention of the rule.

As a result, live mines have been washed ashore on the coast of Holland, neutral shipping has been destroyed within the North Sea and on the Swedish and Irish Coast. Even fishing-boats, which from

time immemorial have been regarded as inviolable, have been sunk and their crews drowned or imprisoned. Very many lives have been lost, and neutrals have had their trade seriously impeded, while Great Britain has been unwillingly compelled, in self-defence, to lay extensive minefields in the North Sea, though she has scrupulously notified her intentions and has taken every care to protect trading-ships in their passages.

In his reply to the speech of the British representative above quoted, Baron Marschall von Beiberstein asserted the principle that military proceedings are not regulated solely by the stipulations of international law. He hinted that they might be overridden by the exigencies of warfare; but on the other hand he declared that the most effectual safeguards against abuse would be such factors as "conscience, good sense, and a sense of the duties which the principles of humanity impose."

That is "all very fine and large," as the man in the music-hall used to say; but German conscience, good sense and humanity are unequal to the strain of temptation. Under pressure of circumstances Germany's naval warfare has degenerated into piracy of the most ugly and primitive kind. Captain Kidd and Blackbeard made men walk the plank, but the naval heroes of Germany give their victims no such merciful notice. It was by pure good fortune that only forty out of a company of two thousand poor Belgian refugees were drowned, when the *Amiral Ganteaume* was sunk in the English Channel on October 24th. The ruffians who discharged the torpedo took no futher interest in the business. Not far from the same spot, near Havre, the steamers *Tokomaru* and *Icaria* were sunk by a submarine on

January 30th, 1915, without any warning to the crews as prescribed in The Hague Convention.

Emboldened by these base, inglorious performances, Germany has declared war against the shipping of the whole world. Determined to break away from international law, she first made mock of it by proclaiming a blockade of the British Islands which she proposed to enforce with a score of submarines. It would now appear that that proclamation was seriously meant. In this alternative Germany vitiated her own case, for she acknowledged that there was such a thing as international law, and then declared her intention of violating it by sinking all vessels, under whatever flag, without summons or examination. She has carried her intention into effect. Again and again British vessels — and even neutral vessels — have been sunk by torpedoes without notice or examination, without care or regard for the life of passenger non-combatants, who have even been fired upon as their ship went down.

Cruel as the Germans were at the beginning of this war, their cruelty has steadily increased with each check they have received; until, at last, every law and custom of civilized war has been thrown to the winds; and on land and sea German official atrocities have been greater than the world has ever known. The work of devils has been done by the German army and navy; and the price of the infamy must be sternly exacted, if Englishmen have still left in them manhood and respect for the honour of humanity. To retribution in kind we cannot resort; but if we are just, we shall put these things first in the bill which must be paid at the end of it all. As this chapter goes to the printers, comes the news of the latest German crime of the sea. The command-

ers of the submarines which, in the last days of March, sank the *Falaba* and the *Aguila* have invested naval warfare with new niceties of barbarism. To give the crew of the *Aguila* four minutes in which to leave their ship, and then, before even that scanty time had elapsed, to shoot down those who were trying to lower the boats, was a refinement of treachery. To sink a great liner, like the *Falaba,* before passengers and crew could get away had the savagery of wild Indians; but to steam round and round among the hundred and fifty drowning people — some of them women — mocking their struggles, is worse than savage: it is the now accepted conduct of a German officer.[5]

Not in Great Britain alone has the crime of the *Falaba* aroused just anger and horror. On March 30th and 31st American newspapers exclaimed in indignation against the crime. The *New York Times* expressed even more moderately than many of its colleagues the general feeling, when it said:

"The sinking of the *Falaba* is perhaps the most shocking crime of the war. It is a crime directly chargeable against Germany, a crime for which Germany will be held responsible in the judgment of civilization, unless an official disclaimer of the act as unauthorized and condemned is promptly forthcoming. It is well-nigh incredible, whatever threats Germany may have made in the war-zone proclamation, that she should have issued to the commanders of her submarines orders to commit these crimes of inhuman atrocity. The objects of war are not furthered by the slaughter of innocent men and women."

For the Germans to plead that the development of the submarine has revolutionized the laws of naval

[5] On April 18th, 1915, a German submarine sank the trawler *Vanilla,* and then attacked the crew of her consort, the *Ferma,* while they were trying to save their drowning comrades.

warfare is conscienceless. The laws are there, subscribed to by Germany, valid until they are changed by the Society of Nations. If their observance by submarines is impossible, then submarines should be employed for work which is in accordance with international law. On that basis England is wholly justified in the blockade she is enforcing against Germany, by which she prevents all supplies from reaching German ports *via* the North Sea. In doing so she respects both property and human life and destroys neither. The shameless crimes which have been committed since February 18th, 1915, and the previous attacks on the *Asturias* and other vessels, have been simply an application of the doctrine of frightfulness. Vice-Admiral Kirchoff, of the German Navy, admitted as much in an article in the Hamburger *Fremdenblatt*. He said that there was no question of a regular blockade, as Germany had not sufficient war material at her disposal. When establishing the war zone Germany's great aim was to bring a feeling of uneasiness and insecurity to a climax, so that human nerve could not stand the strain long.[6] This is the doctrine of *Schrechlichkeit* in a nutshell.

To see it in its fullest development, we must turn to the war on land; and for the present purpose it will be sufficient to treat of the Western area which contributes proofs minutely sifted and examined.[7]

Twelve months ago Belgium was peaceful, pros-

[6] London *Standard*, February 20th, 1915.

[7] To avoid multiplying references, it may here be said that most of the facts as to the German atrocities in Belgium and France are taken from the Reports of the French and Belgian Commissions. M. Northomb's article in the *Revue des deux Mondes*, the facts of which are derived from official sources has been drawn upon, as has also Professor Bedier's remarkable pamphlet, *Les Crimes Allemands d'après des témoignages allemands*, which contains facsimiles of German diaries, letters and newspaper articles.

perous, happy, a densely populated hive of industry, and her peasants were sowing a harvest they would never reap. In her workshops artisans were busy, the hammers and looms were never still. Students from many countries were studying in her great university; from all the world visitors came to see her ancient cities — dreams of beauty, monuments of a splendid past, treasure-houses of art. It was a nation given over to the arts of peace; coveting the territory of no other nation; quarrelling with none; desiring only to be free; content to live out its life of patient endeavour, "storing yearly little dues of wheat and wine and oil."

Of this people what is left to-day? Hundreds of thousands are in exile, living on charity — even those once wealthy — in foreign lands, all in discomfort, many in wretchedness and robbed even of hope. Their King fights in the trenches in the last corner of his kingdom, his Government sits in alien territory. The lot of those who fled in that awful exodus is wretched, the lot of those who have stayed behind is infinitely worse. They crouch in ruins which once were homes. They call for bread and salt, and it is not forthcoming. They would have starved altogether but for the great-hearted pity of other nations. They are the wards of the world. The nation which had reduced them to this pass is content to see them perish of the famine it has made. What supplies it did not destroy in burning towns and granaries, it seized, and still demanded more, while levying immense fines. When charity poured food into Belgium, the conquerors balanced it by making larger requisitions; and they did so by a fraudulent evasion of the spirit of their engagements to the people of America, Canada and Australia who sent these gifts.

Beside all that has been written about Belgium, its miseries, and the evil done to it, the famous Pastoral Letter of Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines and Primate of Belgium stands out in striking vividness and power. Seldom to the modern world has there been given a message of greater character, nobility and rare description. After giving details of barbarities committed, of "churches, schools, asylums, hospitals, convents," in ruins and "entire villages" obliterated, the Cardinal says:

"Hundreds of innocent men were shot. I possess no complete necrology; but I know that there were ninety-one shot at Aerschot, and that there under pain of death their fellow-citizens were compelled to dig their graves. In the Louvain group of communes one hundred and seventy-six persons, men and women, old men and sucklings, rich and poor, in health and sickness, were shot or burnt. In my diocese alone I know that thirteen priests or religious were put to death.[8] . . . We can neither number our dead nor compute the measure of our ruins. And what would it be if we turned our sad steps towards Liége, Namur, Andenne, Dinant, Tamines, Charleroi, and elsewhere?"

This courageous prince of his church, whose Pastoral is the sternest indictment of Germany yet drawn, gives the names of thirty priests in the diocese of Namur, Tournai, and Liége, all of whom to his own personal knowledge were slain in cold blood, and declares that his people look to be righted, and that "they will not hear of surrender." The three nations of the Entente have pledged themselves that he will not be disappointed.

Termonde, Huy, Dinant, and Aerschot, once places of pleasantness and home, are scenes of desolation and ruin which bats and owls inhabit, where only the voice of the furtive mourner is heard. Ma-

[8] The names of priests and parishes are given.

lines is shattered; the glorious Cloth Hall of Ypres is a wreck; churches, the glory of Europe, desecrated by indescribable bestiality, are shapeless ruins; Louvain, that sweet and ancient seat of learning, is a place of desolation. The German, reproached, shrugs his shoulders as did the Duke of Wurtemburg, and, neither resentful nor compassionate, says, "What would you! This is war."

Yes, it is war; but it is not a war which belongs to civilization. It is not even war as it has been understood by heathendom for three thousand years. Here is the vital issue between the accusers and the apologists of Germany: has the devastation of Belgium been a deliberate method or a stern necessity of war? Germany says it is the latter. All has been forced upon her by the acts of her enemies, which justify punishment and reprisal. She takes her stand upon the notorious telegram from Berlin early last August, which unloosed the storms of wantonness, of murder and of woe:

"The only means of preventing surprise attacks from the civil population has been to interfere with unrelenting severity, and to create examples which by their frightfulness would be a warning to the whole country."

The question to be examined is whether this proclamation was merely intended to meet infractions of law by the Belgians, or whether it was not an enunciation of the doctrine of terrorism preached by Clausewitz and Bismarck.

The first point to be observed is that the presumption is against Germany. She does not come into court with clean hands. As has been shown in another chapter,[9] her war record is one crimson with dishonour. She has stood aloof from the onward

[9] *Civilization and this War*, chap. xvi.

march of humanity. Her policy has been that of the "hammer and the skull"— the skull and cross-bones. When, therefore, she has to answer charges of violence and cruelty, we are entitled to demand from her plainer proofs of innocence than from other Western nations. When pressed to meet, by proof, the charges made against her, there have been blank denials, or the charges have been ignored; or, with an almost Oriental cunning, the protesting Governments have been invited to give the names of the offending soldiers!

The charge is not that this soldier or that killed or mutilated a certain person, but that thousands of persons have been killed and thousands of houses destroyed by order of German officers. What they have to do is to prove that these acts were justified through a war-crime committed by the civilian population. Except in the case of Aerschot, there has never been an attempt to fix an offence against the laws of war upon individuals. It is, indeed, beyond peradventure that in some cases there was no provocation at all. A Saxon officer of the 178th Regiment, 12th Army Corps, describes in his diary the destruction of a village in the Ardennes. Here is his frank *histoire:*

"August 26th. The charming village of Gué-d' Hossus has been delivered to the flames, though, as far as I can see, it is quite innocent. I am told that a cyclist fell from his machine, and that in his fall his rifle went off of itself, whereupon the place was fired. They then simply flung the male inhabitants into the flames."

There have also been cases when such tragedies were only averted by chance. In the *Revue des Deux Mondes,* M. Northomb relates a case in point. In a certain district a shot was fired which killed a

horse; the customary vengeance of shooting the inhabitants was about to be taken when an officer, less impulsive than the rest, thought well to order an autopsy, which proved that the animal had been killed by a Mauser bullet. The Mauser bullet is only used by the German army. An illuminating incident also occurred at Croismare. While the Curé was talking to a German officer a shot was fired. "M. le Curé," said the officer, "that is enough to have you and the Maire shot, and to burn a farm to the ground. Look, there is one burning already." "But," replied the Curé, "you are too intelligent not to recognize the sharp sound of your own rifle." To this the officer made no answer. He knew that rifles speak with different accents, and he recognized his own. Nevertheless the farm was burned.

It is possible, and even probable, that here and there civilians committed acts of violence against German soldiers. If it be true, as General von Boehn declared, that his staff-officer was killed in his presence by the son of the householder in whose home they had been carousing, it is necessary to know what attempt upon the family honour had roused that inoffensive youth of sixteen to his fatal fury. Punishment should only follow after careful inquiry, but any pretext sufficed for men whose aim was to be terrible.

And they were terrible enough. In many places a thousand perished where no one was guilty of any offence whatever. The crimes committed have shocked the world, but what happened at Tamines would have made the wife of Agamemnon cover her face. After an artillery engagement the Germans carried a bridge across the Sambre, and entered the village at 5 P.M. on August 21st, 1914. Immediately the work of pillage began. The inhabitants

fled from their homes, only to be overtaken and arrested the next day. On that summer evening, Saturday, August 22nd, the Germans turned from pillage to massacre. Before the church by the river bank they began the slaughter of over four hundred men. Finding rifles too slow, the officers ordered up a machine-gun, and turned it on the guiltless, shuddering crowd. In a few minutes, ragged columns of helpless victims, in the hands of men worse than those Lobengula ever commanded, were heaps of mangled flesh and shattered bone. Force and frightfulness, lead and steel, had once more proclaimed themselves masters over human beings as unarmed as ever Adam was. Seven of these poor souls were only wounded, and they were despatched with thrusts and blows. Some feigned death, and lay all night with the dead, only to be buried alive with the other victims by the order of a doctor. Then, with a fiendish refinement of cruelty, the women and children, the widows and orphans — such as had escaped being burned alive or suffocated in their burning homes — were forced, by the commanding officer, to shout, "Long live Germany." What was the offence which drew down this punishment? None has ever even been alleged.

Dinant figures often in the pages of Froissart. In the course of ages the town has witnessed many scenes of savage warfare, but none so dreadful as those of four fatal days in August, 1914. From the 22nd to the 25th of that month this beautiful place was given over to rapine and murder. It was innocent of any offence. There had been fighting some little time before; but for days all had been calm; there had been no Germans near the town; there had been no opportunity for the civil population to offend, even had they wished. The Germans entered the town in the evening of the 21st, and as

they marched they began firing at the houses, killing a workman going home, wounding another, and forcing him to cry, "Long live the Kaiser." Having bayoneted a third inhabitant in the stomach, they proceeded to get drunk. Saturday, August 22nd, was quiet, for the people were hidden in their houses. On Sunday the storm fell. The Church of the Premonstratensian Fathers was invaded, the congregation were driven out, and fifty men were killed. Then hell spilled over. Houses were sacked; the flying inhabitants were shot; men, women, and children were driven into the Parade Square, and there kept prisoners for nine hours under constant threats of death. At six in the evening, by order of an officer, the men were grouped separately and murdered. They fell in heaps, and volley after volley was poured into the writhing mass, while the poor wives and children of the victims were compelled to witness the ghastly scene. There was no inquiry, no accusation, no pretence of a trial. Next day and the day after the hideous work proceeded. A crowd of workmen with their wives, children, and others hid in the cellars of M. Himmer's factory, but on the evening of the 23rd they issued forth, holding up a white flag, only to be mown down. In another cellar twelve civilians were killed, an aged paralytic was shot in his chair, and a boy of 14 was killed in the Rue Enfer — appropriate name. Following on such horrible incidents there was a bloody massacre at the railway viaduct in the Faubourg de Neffe. An old woman and all her children were killed in their cellar; an old man, with his wife, son and daughter were placed against a wall and shot; an aged crone of 83 and her husband were taken with others in a barge down the river and there butchered. Having shut up some men and women in the courtyard of the

prison, the Germans eventually opened fire upon them with a machine-gun from a neighbouring hill, and killed an old woman and three others. The Belgian official report on this horror ends thus:

"To sum up, the town of Dinant is destroyed. It counted 1,400 houses; only 200 remain. The manufactories where the artisan population worked have been systematically destroyed. Rather more than 700 of the inhabitants have been killed; others have been taken off to Germany, and are still retained there as prisoners of war. The majority are refugees scattered through Belgium. A few who remained in the town are dying of hunger."

The cases of Tamines and Dinant have been given, not because they are more atrocious than others, but because they present some significant features of resemblance. In both, the Germans commenced their work immediately on entering the town, and before the inhabitants had time to give offence. In both, masses of men were massacred. In both, machine-guns were employed; in both, the wounded were brutally despatched; and in both, the victims were forced to cheer their persecutors and murderers. Most important of all, these two events took place simultaneously. They were the work of two different bodies of troops, acting independently. These facts reveal a careful pre-arranged programme of frightfulness, carried out precisely and according to schedule.

At Jemappes, also, there was massacre foul and unprovoked. The Germans were pressing forward to envelop the British forces at Mons, and to achieve their object poured thousands of men against Jemappes. Their advance was checked by 210 British soldiers who, under an heroic leader, Captain Ross, held back on the canal a hundred times as many of the enemy until the crucial moment had passed. Baffled and furious, the Germans wreaked their

vengeance upon the unhappy village. The story was told to a correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* [10] by Mrs. Frankel, an English lady present at the engagement. In it she says:

"It was wicked. The Germans rushed about in all directions committing the wildest excesses. They broke into houses and bayoneted the inhabitants, women and children as well. Then they burned the houses. Three chateaux, over a hundred houses, and the beautiful church were all fired with paraffin. The house in which I was sheltering was set fire to in five places, and I had a miraculous escape from death. The inhabitants had done nothing. The excuse given by the Germans was that they had been fired on at Liége, and anyhow, they added, 'The people of Jemappes helped the English to build their trenches.'"

In view of the fact that the Germans have compelled British prisoners to make trenches for themselves, the latter plea will hardly carry conviction.

Even could the Germans prove provocation, they would not be purged of the charge of organized official atrocity. The Hague Convention forbids collective punishment; international law puts limits on the right of reprisal. This restriction Germany has hideously ignored. She has flaunted her defiance in the face of the nations. In his Proclamation of October 5th, Field-Marshal von der Goltz, appropriately transferred to the Turkish Army at a later date, announced that in casé of damage to railway lines and telegraph wires, the neighbouring localities would be —

"Punished without pity; it matters little if they are accomplices or not."

General von Bülow, in a Proclamation of August

[10] April 1st, 1915.

22nd, complacently assumed responsibility for the massacre of Andenne:

"The inhabitants of Andenne, after having protested their peaceful intentions, made a surprise attack on our troops. It was with my consent that the General had the whole place burnt down, and about 100 people shot. I bring this fact to the knowledge of the town of Liége, so that its inhabitants may know the facts with which they are threatened, if they take up a similar attitude."

There are two points to be noted in this atrocious document. First, no proof has ever been given that the people of Andenne attacked the Germans — in fact, the evidence is all the other way. Again, though General von Bülow sanctioned the murder of "about 10 people," which was illegal, in fact nearly 300 were slaughtered, while 400 more disappeared into captivity.

Could anything be more ghastly in conception and purpose than the Proclamation issued by the German authorities at Rheims? This is the insult to Humanity which must stand forever as a reflection on German character:

"With a view to securing adequately the safety of the troops, and to instil calm into the population of Rheims, the persons named below (81 in number, and including all the leading citizens of the town) have been seized as hostages by the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army. These hostages will be hanged at the slightest attempt at disorder. Also, the town will be totally or partially burned, and the inhabitants will be hanged for any infraction of the above."

From what has been said, then, it appears that, even if punishment was justified, it was hideously and grotesquely excessive, while it is clear that nowhere was sufficient inquiry made. All this serves to discredit the plea of reprisals and to justify the charge

of official organized atrocity as a method of policy; and the variety in invention of cruelty and terrorism would do credit to professional murderers or the authors of shilling shockers of crime. As early as August 27th, we find General von Nicher demanding two million francs in gold from the Burgomaster of Wavre, and another million to be paid on September 1st as a war indemnity; and concluding his demand with these words:

"If these payments are not made, the town of Wavre will be destroyed and burnt, the innocent suffering with the guilty."

Like General von der Goltz, General Nicher makes no discrimination. All are to suffer alike, the aged crone, the tiny infant, the bed-ridden ancient, the nuns in their cloisters. Yet such renegades from civilization have the effrontery to talk of just reprisals! They came prepared for the work that lay before them, provided with fuses and hand-grenades, with inflammable tablets of nitro-cellulose glycerine, thoughtfully concocted by Professor Ostwald of Leipzig, that light of the German intellectuals. With Teutonic thoroughness the army was equipped and drilled for systematic destruction. Eye-witnesses have testified to the methodical nature of the work.

Had only the prudence of the German statesmen equalled the providence of the German War Lords! There are those who believe that all this horror and misery, this welter of slaughter, this crime against humanity, this degradation of a great nation would never have occurred were Bismarck, rough-hearted and relentless as he was, Chancellor of Germany today. Would he, who saw in England "an old and traditional ally," and declared "the preservation of

Anglo-German friendship to be the most important thing," have menaced her with a navy, and outraged her conscience by the violation of Belgium? Author of many tragedies, he would certainly have shrunk from this, the greatest tragedy of all. Bismarck played for peace, but always for safety also.

Germany pleads the hostility of Belgium and the exigencies of war. She has no right to plead the first, she should be ashamed to plead the latter. Who made Belgium Germany's enemy but Germany herself? By common decency, as by the law of nations, she is estopped from regarding Belgium's defence of her neutrality as the act of an enemy. It is a remarkable fact that the only clauses of the Hague Convention incorporated in the German *Kriegsbrauch* deal with these very points: (1) that the territory of neutral States is inviolable; (2) that belligerents may not move troops, or convoys of munitions and supplies across neutral territory; (3) that:

"The fact of a neutral Power resisting, even by force, attempts to violate its neutrality cannot be regarded as a hostile act."

It is stupefying that these articles were adopted on the motion of the representatives of the German Emperor himself at The Hague.

It is, of course, idle to expect that Germany, having broken Article 1, should feel herself bound by Article 2. Having crossed the border, she was bound to fight her way forward; but she was also bound by every honourable and humane obligation of decency and honour — if they can be mentioned in such a connection — to do so with forbearance, remembering that she alone was responsible for the situation. It was her duty to avoid doing damage

as far as possible; to be scrupulous in the observation of the rights of the inhabitants; to ignore accidental and incidental breaches of strict military usage.

Even were Germany's invasion of Belgium legitimate, she could not escape the charge of ruthless barbarity. This is not the first time that Belgium has been the theatre of war. For centuries she has been the stage on which pitiless barbarian commanders and their heathen soldiers have played the grim drama, in days when the Society of Nations was unknown, when sack and pillage were ordinary incidents of warfare. War had its exigencies then as now, and commanders construed them to suit their convenience, unfettered by international law. All the great captains of eight centuries have fought on the plains of Flanders; Louvain and Malines, Dinant and Ypres, have seen archers and musketeers, knights and free companies, disciplined armies and ravenous banditti come and go; and the cities survived until the German came in 1914.

The destruction of great buildings, of cathedrals, such as that of Rheims, of a University like that of Louvain, of the Hotel de Ville at Lille, and the Cloth Market at Ypres, have no parallel in the world. Buildings like the Cathedral at Rheims had seen war and the horrors of war storm upon them, and pass them by; leaving them unscarred and beautiful still. Through generations of turmoil and destruction the noble architectures of Europe have remained as monuments to some elemental, spiritual sense and reverence in the minds of past gladiators — Persians, Turks, Goths, Gauls, and Cimbri — which prevented the ruin of that which was dedicated to great or holy uses. The German armies of 1914 spurned the precedents of history and time. Disturbed by the criti-

cism of the world, they have, however, denied that they meant to destroy Rheims Cathedral; they have declared that it was in the line of the French batteries, and that it had been used by the French troops as an observatory. Mr. Richard Harding Davis, the well-known American writer and war correspondent, who was present during a portion of the bombardment, in an article in *Scribner's Magazine* of January, 1915, after describing the destruction of the Cathedral as one of the greatest crimes in history, says:

"I asked the Abbé Chinot [11] whether he had permitted the French officers to occupy the towers. . . . He told me most vehemently and earnestly that at no time had any officers been permitted to make use of the church for military purposes. For two nights, to protect the non-combatants of the city from airships, he had permitted the soldiers to place a search-light in the tower. But, fearing this would be construed by the Germans as a hostile act, he had ordered the search-light to be removed. And it was not until five nights after it had been removed that the Germans began to bombard. . . . The other excuse of the Germans, that the French artillery was so placed that to fire at it without striking the Cathedral was impossible, is so trifling as to be insolent. The Cathedral was not in the line of fire between the French battery and the German battery. It was between the two French batteries." (He adds that these batteries were two miles from the Cathedral on either side.)

To Mr. Davis' scathing indictment, written in December, the Germans have pleaded guilty by their renewed bombardment of Rheims in February, shattering the noble roof which had withstood their former onslaught. Every motive of policy forbade them to renew a deed which had angered the world and served no military purpose; therefore, to sheer

[11] In authority in the absence of Archbishop Landreux at Rome.

savagery must be ascribed the crime from first to last.

Reprisals, exigencies of war! No casuistry will ever convince the world that the treatment of the invaded territories of Belgium and France, has not been a deliberate official policy. By cowing the people at the very beginning, by overwhelming cruelty, by striking terror into the minds of the people, it was hoped to bring the western war to a speedy end, so as to leave the German armies free to deal with Russia. That, as is known, was the German strategical idea. The stubbornness of Belgium, the stoutheartedness of France, the intervention of England threatened to wreck the well-laid plan. Then Germany resolved to achieve by the help of terror what she could not gain by arms alone.

Mr. Frank Fox, a war correspondent of reputation, shows that this official policy of terrorism was deliberately and carefully fitted in with Belgium's repeated refusals to compromise with her honour.[12] He says that after the destruction of Liége, the German Government made, as we all know, an offer to Belgium that, having satisfied her sense of honour by heroic resistance, she should allow the German army to pass through without resistance, and that Belgian territory would not be retained or annexed, but would be evacuated after the war. It was subsequent to Belgium's stern rejection of the German proposal, that frightfulness was extensively developed, and the laws of war and the dictates of humanity were ignored, though already at Visé and elsewhere it had been rigorously applied.

Mr. Fox observes that on August 19th, the German army occupied Louvain peaceably; that up to August 25th there were no outrages; but that on August 25th a German force, moving on Antwerp,

[12] *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1915.

was defeated, and the outrage came on the night of the 26th, with the return of the discomfited warriors to Louvain. Mr. Fox cogently argues that the systematic sack of Louvain and the massacre of its people was not the result of mere anger and murderous impulse, but —

"A designed act of war, decided upon after the defeat of the 24th of August, and intended to warn Belgium of the consequences of continuing to harass the German advance."

Termonde and Malines were also destroyed utterly because the Belgian Government still persisted in refusing to accept German occupation and the invasion of her neutrality. The resistance of Belgium was disastrously interfering with Germany's advance upon France; it was causing her to keep a couple of Army Corps at work to contain the Belgian army; so, to break the spirit of the Belgian nation, towns and cities and villages were sacrificed in circumstances of horror and savagery. When it was seen that this policy of terrorism and murder produced no effect save to inspire the Belgians with an everlasting heroism, it was not pursued in the same proportion. Mr. Fox, in writing of this, uses the following words:

"The incidents of beastliness, the strange degenerate acts of nastiness and sacrilege, with which the Germans spiced their ordered and deliberate cruelties, must be set down to the account of the tiger and the ape still surviving in our human nature. German officers and soldiers were not always content to kill out of hand and to burn quickly. They had to torture men beforehand, and to desecrate and insult beautiful buildings before destroying them."

That is the statement made by a correspondent who was in Louvain and in Antwerp in the days of which he writes. Mr. Powell, the correspondent of

the *New York Herald,* summed the matter up in his interview with General von Boehn, the destroyer of Aerschot. The General defended his act as one of righteous retribution.

"The townspeople only got what they deserved," he remarked.

"But why wreak your vengeance on women and children?" Mr. Powell asked.

"None have been killed," said the General positively.

"I myself," replied Mr. Powell, "have seen the mutilated bodies. . . . How about the women I saw with the hands and feet cut off? How about the little girl, two years old, shot in her mother's arms? How about the old man that was hung from the rafters of his house and roasted to death by a bonfire being built under him?"

The disconcerted General, then, we are told, fell back on the plea that soldiers sometimes get out of hand.

This explanation might cover the act of the soldiers at Dinant who entered the National Bank and shot the manager and his son because they refused to open the safe; but it cannot cover organized pillage by the German army. The Duke of Gronau superintended the pillage of the Chateau of Villiers-Notre-Dame, when 146 plates, 236 enamelled spoons, three gold watches, 1,500 bottles of wine, besides ducks, chickens, linen and children's clothes were removed. It is stated, in an article on German atrocities in the special number of the *Field,*[13] that Prince Eitel Fritz, son of the War-Lord himself, plundered a chateau near Liége, and sent the whole of his hostess's wardrobe to Germany. He has

[13] Quoting the article by M. Northomb in *Revue des deux Mondes.*

since received the Order of Merit. Following their example, an officer at Baron, on the Oise, stole 8,300 francs from the safe of M. Robert, a notary; while another swaggered about the town with nine women's rings on his hands. Robbing was made easy by order. At Lunéville, General von Forbender actually issued to the citizens a Proclamation that, "Anyone who shall have deliberately hidden money . . . shall be shot." By the Hague Convention private property must be respected, the *Kriegsbrauch* denounces looting as burglary; but this product of German *Kultur* makes it a capital offence for a citizen to conceal his savings from German plunderers.

There is, in the German army, an iron discipline unknown in any other army in the world; it is the boast of the nation, it has been proved unbreakable on numberless stricken fields. German professors well-tutored by their masters, have declared that German troops in this war are "not behaving with indiscipline." This is precisely the case which is made against Germany: that the horrors of the so-called reprisals, that the other atrocities committed where there was no question of reprisal, are not acts of indiscipline but the application of a deliberate policy.

Let us take a few cases. Contrary to law and humanity civilians have been dragged into the firing line as a shield for the soldiers. It has been done by German officers who have plumed themselves upon it. Thus, First Lieutenant Eberlein, of a Bavarian regiment, recounted the following exploit with pride in the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten.* It occurred in an action where the Germans were holding a village:

"I had an excellent idea. I had three civilians arrested and had them placed in chairs in the middle of the street.

They objected, but I replied to their supplications with a gun-butt. . . . The fire directed at our men at once diminished, and my men were thus masters of the principal street. . . . As I learned later, the Bavarian Reserve Regiment, which was on the north side of the town, made a similar experiment to mine. Four civilians, whom they also placed on chairs in the middle of the street, were killed by French bullets. I saw them myself lying in the middle of the street near the hospital."

It is difficult to imagine such a thing being done by the officer of any civilized army, but to boast of it afterwards bespeaks a depravity apparently peculiar to Germany among Western nations.

Again, take the description of a fight near Hanonville, in an article written by Under-Officer Klemt, of the 154th Infantry Regiment, and published in the *Jauersches Tageblatt*, of October 18th, 1914, under the title of "A Day of Honour for our Regiment":

"In a small hollow we found crowds of dead and wounded Frenchmen. We gave no quarter, we smashed or transfixed the wounded. . . . Beside me I heard a curious cracking: they were blows of a rifle-butt which a soldier of the 154th was vigorously applying to the bald head of a wounded Frenchman; for this job he very prudently used a French rifle, for fear of breaking his own. Men of particularly tender soul did the wounded French the favour of finishing them off with a bullet, but the others took their chance with the stock or the bayonet. . . . There the wounded were lying, groaning and asking for quarter. But whether they were slightly or severely wounded, our brave fusiliers saved the country the expense of treating so many enemies."

Only the excesses of some bad men who had got out of hand, remark the Duke of Würtemburg and General von Boehn! That will not do here. Klemt's article was "certified exact" by his own superior officer, Lieutenant De Niem. Nor is this an

isolated case. Reservist Reinhard Brenneisen, 4th Company, 112th Regiment, Mülhausen, records in his diary, under date of August 21st, 1914, how, "There came a Brigade Order that all French soldiers, whether wounded or not, who fell into our hands, should be shot. No prisoners were to be made."

If further proof is needed of the disregard of the laws of war by the German army, the following Order issued to the 58th Brigade, on August 26th, should be noted:

"From to-day no prisoners will be taken. All prisoners will be killed. The wounded, whether armed or unarmed, will be slaughtered. Even prisoners already collected in convoys will be killed. Not a single living enemy shall remain behind us.

(*Signed*) Lieutenant and Company Leader, STOY.
Col. and Reg. Commander, NEUBAUER.
General, commanding Brigade, STENGER."

The German General Staff do not forbid the murder of prisoners. They may be killed —

"In case of overwhelming necessity, when other means of precaution do not exist, and the existence of prisoners becomes a danger to one's own existence." [14]

Necessity is a truly Germanic plea. Other nations have had prisoners and found them embarrassing. More than once the Boers were in that plight in the South African War. They did not, however, kill their captives; they released them. But then, the Boers of South Africa had never drunk from the beaker of German *Kultur*. In the true Prussian spirit the same supreme authority which permits the killing of prisoners also approves of "assassination,

[14] *The German War Book*, by J. H. Morgan, p. 74.

incendiarism and robbery," to the prejudice of the enemy when committed by "third parties." In other words, keep the rules yourself, if it suits your purpose, but incite other people to break them and you shall be immune — the Junker and the jail-bird in sympathetic collusion.

There is hardly a rule of war which has not been broken by the German armies, hardly a dictate of honour in war which has not been flouted. The *Kriegsbrauch* itself condemns as utterly dishonourable certain ruses of war, of which nevertheless the Germans have been guilty; among them is the "feigned surrender in order to kill the enemy who then approaches unsuspiciously." Numerous breaches of this ordinance could be given, but one must suffice. At Moy, near Mons, a squadron of the 12th Lancers charged 157 Germans. When close up, the enemy dropped their arms and held up their hands. With much difficulty, for the pace was fast, the Lancers threw up their weapons and managed to ride through the enemy's ranks without doing injury. Before they could pull up the Germans seized their rifles and opened fire on the cavalry, whose backs were still turned, hitting several men, among them the Colonel. It will, doubtless, be satisfactory to the German General Staff that not one of these ruffians survived.[15]

[15] In *The Times* of September 14th, 1914, an artillery officer describes how the Germans "ran into one of our regiments with some of their officers dressed in French uniforms. They said, 'Don't fire, we are French,' and asked for the C.O. When he came they shot him dead. . . . The Germans certainly are brutes." "Never again," writes Lieutenant Edgcumbe of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, "shall I respect the Germans. They have no idea of honour, and there have been many occasions of their wearing French and British uniforms." Lieutenant Edgcumbe spoke from bitter experience, for his own battalion was badly cut up by means of this treacherous device.

In all this wretched story, perhaps the most revolting, as it is the most significant, feature, is the fact that the ringleaders were the officers. So far from trying to restrain their men, they gave the cue and set the example. "It was like a pack of hounds let loose," wrote Gaston Klein, a soldier of the Landsturm, when describing the sack of Louvain; "everyone did as he liked. The officers led the way and gave good example." At Baron, two soldiers told the notary, M. Robert, that they were hired by their commanding officer to pillage, and received four marks for every piece of jewellery they brought him. In one district a German soldier brought 1 franc 8 centimes to a nun, and gave it to her for her charities. "I am forced to pillage," he said, "but I am not a robber."

The Rectors and Professors of twenty-two German Universities have issued an indignant protest against the charge of barbarity against the German army. They have appealed to the culture of their race; it is impossible, they declare, that these things can have been done, seeing that their army —

"Comprises the whole nation from the first to the last man; that it is led by the best of our country's sons."

Yet, when they have not descended to theft, these gentlemen of Germany, the "best of their country's sons," by wanton destruction, have given a tang to the taste of victory. Not content with living in strangers' houses, drinking their wine and purloining their valuables, they have left these houses wrecked and shamefully defiled. An American gentleman, living in the Department of the Oise, has described his experiences.[16] When the British came they respected the American flag, and refrained from enter-

[16] *Daily Telegraph*, December 9th, 1914.

ing the house. Next day the Germans came and remained nine days. They began by tearing down the Stars and Stripes, and ended by wrecking the whole place. They smashed the furniture, tore hangings and bed-clothes to rags, and left everything " soaked with blood and filth; they did not leave clothing, shoes, or hats of over ten dollars value, belonging to my wife, myself, and my eight servants." Dresses were slashed with knives, shoes were cut to pieces, the gardens were destroyed, pumps were flung into the river, hundreds of bottles of wine were emptied and strewn about the house and grounds. This was the treatment " of a peaceful American citizen living with his paralysed and bedridden wife in France." The Chateau de Baye was occupied by a General and his Staff Officers, among them a " Highness "; [17] and the Chateau de Beaumont had the honour of sheltering Count Waldersee and Major Ledebur. Yet the official French report on the atrocities tells us that these places were pillaged. Desks, strong boxes, and jewel cases were broken open and emptied, and the houses were left unfit for habitation. The " noble sons " of modern Germany have followed the policy of Nebuchadnezzar, and have made their enemy's house into dunghills. The sickening history of innocent daughters of unwilling hosts of German officers made to wait upon them naked as they ate and drank, and afterwards ravished, will have attention when Germany is called upon to pay the account accumulating against her. Across Europe is written large what Prussianism means.

The picture of France and Belgium is dreadful enough, but it is doubtful whether the picture of Germany is not even more poignant. Here we see a great nation, justly proud of what it has accom-

[17] Declared by M. Northomb to be very near the purple.

plished, parading insistently its mental and moral excellence, now fallen from its high estate, false to its professions, a traitor to the world, claiming to be Man Civilized and proving to be in war still Beast Uncivilized. Much may be pardoned to ambition and aggression; even wanton aggression loses half its ugliness if the aggressor fights fairly. But ambition and aggression, which break every rule of man; every law of honour and humanity fettering them; which rely not on valour but on the fear that can be inspired in the helpless — these are the crimes which torment the world into a long and deep resentment.

CHAPTER XVIII

LIGHTS AND LESSONS OF THE WAR

IT would not be reasonable or natural to end this book without a brief survey of certain aspects of the great conflict so far as it has gone.

This world-war is a purgatorial passage through which mankind is moving into a new existence. Whatever be the end, whoever the victors, the active, peopled, fighting, organized yet disordered world of our knowing, with its arbitrary boundaries and errant ambitions will never be the same again. Many of the old landmarks, political, social, economic, will be obliterated. The old lamps will be exchanged for new. After the first bewilderment, when the war-work is done and over, healthier and saner policies and systems of world-government will emerge from the present traditions and conditions. The new evolution may be swift and sudden, it may be prolonged and gradual; but it is certain that there lies before us the making of new rules of international conduct, and the recasting and reforging of national policies to march with international responsibility, so that its activity may be secured and its will enforced.

In this there would be nothing extraordinary. The evolution of civilization has not proceeded in an even ratio of continuous growth. It has been marked by long pauses and short sharp paroxysms, vast convulsions followed by advances as imperceptible as the movements of a glacier. But the novelty of this revolutionary moment is that we are conscious

of the greatness of the impending change as men have not been before. The actors and spectators in the decisive scenes of the huge world-drama of the Past never realized the profound effects of their efforts as we are realizing ours. They builded, or destroyed, better than they knew; we, though we may not know precisely what we are building towards, are at least conscious of the magnitude of the task and anxious that our designs shall be wise. Wars there have been which blotted out civilizations, but centuries passed before men could measure their importance. In the story of Columbus, we are told that his men saw fires on the shore the night before they set foot on the new land, now the home of millions of our race. Men sat beside these fires unconscious of what was to befall them; unknowing that within a few hours their slow but sure obliteration would begin, and their control of a continent pass to other hands. We know to-day what the landing of Columbus in Hispaniola meant for mankind; but mankind did not know it then, nor for many a generation afterwards.

We who live now are able to view events in truer perspective than those of older times, and this is due not to superior intelligence, but to wider knowledge. In a real sense we are all now citizens of the world. With the history of most remote periods opened to us by modern research, by the achievements of science and the use of electricity, we can better realize the fact that Europe is now passing through one of the revolutions of progress; that the doors have been flung open on new horizons.

Most theories of the books and the schools, most judgments of independent thinkers, have been demolished by this war. It intrigues the mind to note that prophecy has been most nearly justified where

the prophets had the least to guide them, namely, warfare at sea. The devastating effect of shell-fire, the prowess of the submarine, the employment of mines — these have been displayed in the contest, so far as it has gone, with singular fidelity to forecast. This is probably due to the fact that the factors in the problem were fewer and more susceptible of analysis by the expert.

It has not been so with the land-war. We all knew that the old methods and measures, that the tactics of Waterloo and the Crimea, were obsolete; that men no longer fired on one another at bow-shot distance; that the glow and colour, the clash of music and the fluttering of banners had departed from the battlefield. We realized that the modern battle was invested with a certain mysterious invisibility; that men crawled to the attack in scattered lines, dull and inconspicuous, in uniforms scientifically coloured to elude the eye: yet we still imagined great spaces covered by moving hosts, great columns wheeling into position and deploying for the forward movement against distant enemies. The South African War taught us so much. We also began to understand that modern battles do not necessarily end in a day; that the fate of a nation is not decided on a Sunday afternoon; that even the three days of the battle of Leipzig might be insufficient to decide the issue. We learned that lesson in Manchuria. We did not grasp, however, the astounding fact that a battle may continue day and night for weeks, and even months, without a decision being reached. It may be doubted whether the War Lords themselves, the men who apply their powerful intellects to the lifelong study of war, really foresaw the developments of the present conflict in Eastern and Western Europe.

It was perhaps generally recognized that the armies of to-day must be very large; that they would be enormously greater than any commanded by Marlborough or Napoleon, than the forces fighting in 1870 or in any subsequent wars. Yet one of the ablest of the laymen who wrote of war; one who, more than all others, has predicted the future, and who has to his credit the most accurate forecasts of naval warfare, was emphatic in his view that the military future belonged to small armies scientifically handled. The millions of Russia, France and Germany were so much adipose tissue; the military nations were giants, shaky at the knees, and destined to be knocked out by some small, scientific, enterprising and active antagonist. Modern weapons and contrivances, he declared, were continually decreasing the number of men who could be efficiently employed upon any length of front. He doubted if there was any use for more than 400,000 men upon the whole Franco-Belgian frontier, and believed that this number could hold the frontier against any number of assailants.

This not unpopular theory has been rudely overthrown. Probably two millions of men have been fighting night and day since September, 1914, upon the Franco-Belgian frontier.[1] The fact is, no one realized that, under modern conditions, battles would become practically immobile. The main principles of strategy are, no doubt, much the same now as they have ever been, but the tactics which supplement and support the strategy seem to be revolutionized. The 400,000 men on whom Mr. Wells depended to

[1] The forces engaged in some of the most famous battles of the past are as follows: — Lule Burgas, 1912, 400,000; Mukden, 1905, 701,000; Sedan, 1870, 244,000; Gravelotte, 1870, 301,000; Sadowa, 1866, 436,000; Waterloo, 1815, 217,000; Leipzig, 1813, 472,000.

hold France against the attack of superior force could obviously only do so if they could move swiftly and secretly from one threatened point to another. It was in such manner that Napoleon, in perhaps the greatest of all his campaigns — that of 1814 — kept the allied armies at bay for many weeks. So far as speed of movement is concerned the armies of to-day have tactical opportunities of which Napoleon never dreamed. When whole army corps can be shifted from Antwerp to Warsaw and back again in a few days, it is a small thing to fling fifty or sixty thousand men upon some vulnerable or vital position, say one hundred miles away.

But the value of military movements now, as always, lies less in their speed than in their secrecy. To deceive one's adversary was the first object of the general; to penetrate the deceptions was the main difficulty of his antagonist. Driving, one day, to Strathfieldsaye with a friend, the Duke of Wellington amused himself by guessing the nature of the ground lying behind various hills. His friend remarked on the astonishing accuracy of his predictions, on which the Duke replied, "The art of war consists in knowing what is on the other side of the hill." Napoleon laid it down that correct information was the most important factor in securing victory. In the day of such great War Lords information was not easy to obtain, and commanders had to depend largely on intuition. All that is changed; tactics have been stripped of their mystery. The time-honoured plan of leaving the camp fires burning while the army retired is of no avail against scouting aircraft. Flanking movements — that prime device for achieving victory — are made all but impossible when sky-scouts can discern the movements of men and trains, twenty, fifty, a hundred, two hundred

miles behind the firing line. Turning movements are instantly met by a corresponding transfer of troops to the threatened point. So we saw the Franco-British attempt to turn the German right near Soissons resolve itself into a parallel development of the opposing lines until they reached the North Sea, where further progress was impossible. Ensues, therefore, the astonishing spectacle of a continuous battle line of several hundred miles, only limited by the fact that geographical and physical reasons prevent further extension. In the Eastern theatre of war the circumstances are much the same, though the length of the front — from the Baltic to the Danube — has given more freedom of movement. It would seem that, if the old tactical principles are to hold good in future wars, continents not countries will be the stage of the operations.

But this is not the only, or perhaps even the most surprising reversal of our military speculations. We have more or less clearly understood that war had lost some of its pageantry; but we did not realize that it had lost it all. We knew that battles were fought at long range between forces all striving for invisibility; but we still saw in the mind's eye a battle as a vast living picture, lines or masses of men moving here and there slowly or swiftly; batteries whirling into position; commanders on distant hills watching every shift of the gusts of war; mounted orderlies desperately galloping here and there. Battles might not have the glow and colour of old time — that was understood; but they were still to be stirring scenes full of motion, of life, of death.

How different is the reality! Let us leave the base to visit a modern battlefield, wearing a cap of darkness, since generals are wanting in hospitality for intruding and inquisitive civilians.

A broad plain teems with life and movement. There are tents and houses over which waves the Red Cross flag; long strings of motor omnibuses and wagons move along the roads; bivouacs are seen whence the smoke of the kitchens eddies upwards; regiments, brigades, divisions crawl along like vast serpents; the sun shines on the lance-points of a cavalry squadron. Along the railways train follows train laden with freight; at the depots are great mountains of hay and straw, and hillocks of boxes branded with the shamrock; uncouth mottled monsters go puffing along the line, like a dreadnought on wheels or the grotesque toy of a schoolroom. Here are hangars such as can be seen at Hendon or Brooklands; outside them mechanics are mending aeroplanes, while the aviators stroll about waiting for their turn on duty. Forges are blazing, busy hammering goes on in carpenters' shops; and everywhere is the noise and stir of men at work. Yet, save for the hospitals and the soldiers and the armoured trains, and a strange humming in the air, no signs of battle show. It is a scene full of interest — and disappointment.

Our invisible guide quickens our interest as he murmurs "Army Headquarters," and we search the neighbourhood to find the place where dwells the man who holds our destiny in his hands. There is a chateau on a neighbouring hill — that must be the place. Not so. Commanders-in-Chief do not select conspicuous dwellings, nor are they anxious to let the world know their address. The headquarters are down in that little town yonder in a small and unpretentious house. There are a few motor-cars in front, dingy and weather-beaten, covered with mud and dust; for war is all dust or mud; there is no happy medium. No gorgeous staff lounges about; they are

far too busy inside, mostly writing. Through the windows comes the constant tap-tap of typewriters and the jingle of telephone bells. One can see just such a scene any day in a stockbroker's office in Copthall Avenue, save that these clerks wear khaki, and that the quiet absorbed man in the inner room is not telephoning orders to buy or sell shares. So much for the pageantry of war. In the actual fighting there is nothing spectacular at all.

We leave the headquarters and move on, guided always by the dull sounds coming from the firing lines. As we get nearer the sound changes. It is resolved into its component parts — the roar of the heavy guns and howitzers, the sharp crack of the field guns, the irregular pip-pip, pip-pip-pip, of the mitrailleuse, the rifle-fire like the crackling of thorns aflame. Through and above the uproar is the spiteful zip of the rifle bullets, varying from the crack of a stock-whip to the drowsy drone of a bumble bee; the whine of shrapnel shell and the rending scream of large projectiles. On every side are shapeless ruins which once were houses; columns of smoke rise from stricken cottages; in the air small fleecy clouds of shell-smoke form and disappear; and here and there in the fields spring up masses of smoke, black, green, yellow. It is the battlefield at last.

Within our range of vision probably fifty thousand men are hurling death at each other, but never a man is to be seen. A few aeroplanes circling overhead are the only signs of life. They seem like vultures scanning a desert in search of food. All our previous ideas of battle as a moving picture are shattered. A rabbit-warren after the firing of a shot is not more lonely than the space we see. The battlefield is indeed a rabbit-warren, for, as we proceed, we find the

fields scarred with trenches and every trench filled with men.

So far as a layman may judge, the result, as a whole, has been confusion to all pre-war calculations and expectations. It has for years been an axiom, of ever-increasing acceptance, that the days of hand-to-hand fighting were almost at an end. A recent and admirable little book by a distinguished writer of authority, says that though he cannot altogether accept the theory that the bayonet is now quite superfluous, he believes it would be true if infantry was always plentifully supplied with ammunition; if they could always keep their organization intact, would remain cool, and could never be taken by surprise. This makes a very wide demand for the purpose of establishing a principle. Even in its modified form the theory has already been disproved. Throughout the war the bayonet has played a vital part. It was so even in the first days when the armies were still in constant motion and before the period of entrenchment had begun. As the campaign developed on settled lines the bayonet showed that it had once more come into its own.

The very causes which it was thought would make fighting at close quarters impossible in this war have combined to make it necessary. Against modern shell and rifle fire such cover as the surface-ground provides becomes increasingly inadequate. Aeroplanes search out the positions and indicate the ranges with deadly precision. Advance in the open is only possible in very loose formation, and, even if the men get within charging distance, they can bring no weight of numbers to bear upon the enemy. When it is attempted by frontal attacks in close order, by which weight alone can tell sufficiently, the punishment is terrific, as German efforts have shown.

Even rifle-fire at the close range of fifty yards is reduced to a minimum. Now and then it may break out in a gusty squall, as when a British soldier kindly tells the neighbouring Germans of the loss of a ship, and is called a liar for his pains; or when some French wags tantalize their hungry foemen by trailing sardine tins between the trenches; but the real business is done under the dim stars with the bayonet and the kukhri and the hand-grenade. It is a revelation to be told of midnight raids by stealthy Gurkhas, of trenches taken and retaken with the cold steel; and to think how often we have been assured that future battles would be decided entirely by scientific tactics at long distances. As a fact, science has destroyed tactics; great weapons of precision have in a sense and in certain conditions defeated their own purpose; and there has been a reversion to a more primitive epoch when battles were decided by the stoutness of heart and strength of arms of individual men.

Time was, not so very long ago, when it was thought that the human element was to be eliminated from war; that men were to be assimilated to the machines which were at once their instruments and masters; that the soldier would become a marching-machine, a digging-machine, a firing-machine. At this the Prussian militarists aimed; their training made for it; but the system has had the effect of brutalizing the individual, whose personal freedom and initiative still has its chance in the aftermath of a fight, when man becomes the machine, bloody, merciless, a monster killing for the sake of killing.

The German war-makers, so long immured in their laboratories of death, drunken with calculations, must realize at last that their pawns are not made of ivory; that actual battles are not merely scientific

problems to be worked out by rule, but have their intense, if elusive, psychology. It is a happy thing for us to-day that France and England did not fall into the form of error which has controlled Junkerdom; that some saving grace — perhaps the democratic principle working through our own war-systems — made them realize that the pawns were made of flesh and blood; that they were men and not machines, not mad mastodons of *Kultur*.

And such men! Let it be set down in the credit-balance of this war — so small in discernible good, unless it be found in the stand taken against the obdurate, the malevolent mercenaries who would destroy the world's peace for that gain which is got by the sword — that it has restored our faith in the virility of man. Of late years there has been indeed terribly much to make us doubt it. To all appearance the world had grown over-refined — not with the refinement of high thought and high endeavour, but with the finesse of being and doing in its more exhausting forms of soft-living; of love of pleasant things; of delicate nerves; of slackness in hard duty; of self-indulgence; of delight in morbid literature, and of a sickly and "precious" intellectuality varied by outbursts of hysteria even more depressing in what it boded. One of its worst signs was the attitude of many pacifists of the sentimental kind who were more decadent than pacific; who would insist that because England had had no really great war since the beginning of the nineteenth century, she would have her luck still, and that luck would see us through our time. We were to let things slide — the old *laissez-allez* policy, and all would come right for us. These were not actively anti-national people, but weak wanton folk who are

the very curse of the democracy of which they think themselves the ornament.

The Kaiser was keen enough to see the danger of all this kind of thing, and many years ago he set his face against the softer virtues; against the gentler living and feeling which belonged to Southern Germany, to the Germany which loved Goethe and Schiller and Lessing; lest the humaneness and kindliness of it should, with prosperity, become lassitude, natural inertia and "the weak backs of a nation of Werthers." He had his cure — the good old Prussian cure; brutality to be called robustness; strong drink to be called naturalness; vice to be called vigour; lasciviousness to be called the body primitive; and savagery to be called strength. In his acknowledged ambition to make Berlin the heart of a "healthy animalism," he knew that his Prussian would not disappoint him. He would see his Berlin a capital of Corinthian irregularities and rough, stout, hard, coarse-living humanity; whereby an example should be set to the rest of Germany which he was Prussianizing in other ways, restoring the ancient reputation of Prussia. Duelling should be kept alive and encouraged, the supremacy of the soldier who represented Force should be established socially, civically and nationally; physical dominance should be the set criterion, and the man of the clanking heel should be the cynosure of all eyes, the captain of all hearts. William did not labour in vain. He produced his superman, his magnificent blond beast, as Nietzsche had told him to do: and we have seen him at work on his path of frightfulness and ghastly inhumanity.

Without the aid of such desperate antidotes to the poison of softness, however, the men of the more

western nations, and the Muscovite also, have emerged from the dangers of a period of too ripe living, cool, calm, virile, unboasting in success and undismayed by failure; laying aside their internal feuds, putting away their luxuries, forgetting their fads, and facing primal realities; men going out to die with a smile, women with tearless eyes bidding them go forth to do their duty.

So, for England and her allies it was only a veneer of decadence after all. Beneath it lay the old qualities which have led mankind up the long slopes of progress, strong, hard, rough if you like, but touched ever by a greatness of soul which impelled them to great purposes in the day of trial. Russia has banished vodka, France has prohibited absinthe, England has prayed her men not in vain to be sober in the field of war; but the trail of the German in this war has been marked by bottles sacked from civilian cellars, while chateaux have been made into bodegas, and cottages into brothels and shebeens.

There have, of course, been exceptions to the picture here drawn of British men in this day of war. There is the sentimental theorist, living in a universe of his own imagining, unable to recognize the rough facts of the actual world, he who thinks Utopia, like Venus, will rise from a sea of Parliamentary resolutions. There is the political Thersites, who grubs for his livelihood in a midden of journalistic garbage, whose irresponsibility easily becomes disloyalty. There is the intellectual mountebank, the superman of egotism, who achieves the notoriety, which he mistakes for fame and on which he relies for subsistence, by belittling every aspiration and deriding every virtue; who expends his ingenious talent in devising new tricks that may serve to keep

him in the glare of the footlights. There are the slaves of gain who make ignoble profit by supplying the enemy with the means to destroy their fellow-countrymen; there are alas! men who still put their appetites before their duty; there are degenerates here and there who satisfy their patriotism by watching other men doing what they will not do themselves. There is the scum on every pot that boils; and it is only when it boils that the scum is discovered.

It is not the least of the things to be set to the credit-balance that we are finding out the real nature of things which, in peace-time, eluded analysis. We are eliminating the dross from the true metal; and we may take heart in seeing how great is the proportion of the gold to the dross. Europe to-day bears thousands of scars witnessing to man's brutality, but she exhibits millions of monuments to the majesty of men. Not far back in our memory an ingenious and very able writer declared that modern science was making war impossible. In the terror of modern inventiveness he saw the dawn of universal peace. Militarism was defeating its own ends; there would be no more fighting, because flesh and blood could not endure against the new engines of war. Since M. Bloch wrote, new terrors have sprung from the arsenals. Guns have been invented before which the stoutest fortresses shrivel into fiery dust; shells destroy men in platoons, blow them to pieces, bury them alive; death pours from the clouds and spouts upward through the sea; motor-power hurls armies of men on points of attack in masses never hitherto employed, concealment is made well-nigh impossible. These things, however, have but made war more difficult and dreadful; they have not made it impossible. They have only succeeded in

plumbing profounder depths of human courage, and evoking higher qualities of endurance than have ever been seen before.

The torch of valour has been passed from one brave hand to another down the centuries, to be held to-day by the most valiant in the long line of heroes. Deeds have been done in Europe since August, 1914, which rival the most stirring feats sung by Homer or Virgil, by the Minnesingers of Germany, by the troubadours of Provence, or told in the Norse sagas or Celtic ballads. No exploit of Ajax or Achilles excels that of the Russian Cossack, wounded in eleven places and slaying as many foes. The trio that held the bridge against Lars Porsena and his cohorts have been equalled by the three men of Battery L, fighting their single gun in the grey and deathly dawn until the enemy's battery was silenced. Private Wilson, who, single-handed, killed seven of the enemy and captured a gun, sold newspapers in private life; but he need not fear comparison with any of his ancient and radiant line. Who that cares for courage can forget that Frenchman, forced to march in front of a German battalion stealing to surprise his countrymen at the bridge of Three Grietchen, near Ypres. To speak meant death for himself, to be silent meant death for his comrades; and still the sentry gave no alarm. So he gave it himself. "Fire! For the love of God, fire!" he cried, his soul alive with sacrifice; and so died. The ancient hero of romance, who gathered to his own heart the lance-heads of the foe that a gap might be made in their phalanx, did no more than that. Nelson conveniently forgot his blind eye at Copenhagen, and even in this he has his followers still. Bombardier Havelock was wounded in the thigh by fragments of shell. He had his wound dressed at the

ambulance and was ordered to hospital. Instead of obeying, he returned to his battery, to be wounded again in the back within five minutes. Once more he was patched up by the doctor and sent to hospital, this time in charge of an orderly. He escaped from his guardian, went back to fight, and was wounded for the third time. Afraid to face the angry surgeon, he lay all day beside the gun. That night he was reprimanded by his officers — and received the V.C.! Also there are the airmen, day after day facing appalling dangers in their frail, bullet-torn craft. Was there ever a stouter heart than that of the aviator, wounded to death and still planing downwards, to be found seated in his place and grasping the controls, stone-dead? Few eyes were dry that read the almost mystic story of that son of France who, struck blind in a storm of fire, still navigated his machine, obedient to the instructions of his military companion himself mortally wounded by shrapnel and dying even as earth was reached.

There is no need to worship the past with a too abject devotion, whatever in the way of glory it has been to us and done for us. Chandos and Du Guesclin, Leonidas and De Bussy have worthy compeers to-day. Beside them may stand Lance-Corporal O'Leary, the Irish peasant's son. Of his own deed he merely says that he led some men to an important position, and took it from the Huns, "Killing some of their gunners and taking a few prisoners." History will tell the tale otherwise: how this modest soldier, outstripping his eager comrades, coolly selected a machine-gun for attack, and killed the five men tending it before they could slew round; how he then sped onwards alone to another barricade, which he captured, after killing three of the enemy, and making prisoners of two more. Even official-

ism burst its bonds for a moment as it records the deed:

"Lance-Corporal O'Leary thus practically captured the enemy's position by himself, and prevented the rest of the attacking party from being fired on."

The epic of Lieutenant Leach and Sergeant Hogan, who volunteered to recapture a trench taken by the Germans, after two failures of their comrades, is reading to give one at once a gulp in the throat and a song in the heart. With consummate daring they undertook the venture; with irresistible skill they succeeded; killing eight of the enemy, wounding two, and taking sixteen prisoners. In the words of the veteran of Waterloo, "It was as good fighting as Boney himself would have made a man a gineral for."

There are isolated incidents of this kind in every war; but in a thousand different places in France and Belgium the dauntless, nonchalant valour of Irishmen, Englishmen, Scotsmen and Welshmen have shown themselves. Did ever the gay Gordons do a gayer or more gallant thing than was done on the 29th of September, 1914, on the western front? Thirty gunners of a British field battery had just been killed or wounded. Thirty others were ordered to take their place. They knew that they were going to certain death, and they went with a cheery "Good-bye, you fellows!" to their comrades of the reserve. Two minutes later every man had fallen, and another thirty stepped to the front with the same farewell, smoking their cigarettes as they went out to die — like that "very gallant gentleman," Oates, who went forth from Scott's tent into the blizzard and immortality. Englishmen can lift up their heads with pride, human nature can take

heart and salute the future with hope, when the Charge of the Five Hundred at Gheluvelt is recalled. There, on the Ypres road to Calais, 2,400 British soldiers — Scots Guards, South Wales Borderers and the Welsh and Queen's Regiments — held up 24,000 Germans in a position terribly exposed. On that glorious and bloody day the Worcesters, 500 strong, charged the hordes of Germans, twenty times their number, through the streets of Gheluvelt and up and beyond to the very trenches of the foe; and in the end the ravishers of Belgium, under the stress and storm of their valour, turned and fled. On that day 300 out of 500 of the Worcesters failed to answer the Roll Call when the fight was over, and out of 2,400 only 800 lived of all the remnants of regiments engaged; but the road to Calais was blocked against the Huns; and it remains so even to this day. Who shall say that greatness of soul is not the possession of the modern world? Did men die better in the days before the Cæsars?

Not any one branch of the service, not any one class of man alone have done these deeds of valour; but in the splendid democracy of heroism the colonel and the private, the corporal and the lieutenant — one was going to say, have thrown away, but no! — have offered up their lives on the altars of sacrifice heedless of all save that duty must be done.

But greater than such deeds, of which there have been inspiring hundreds, is the patient endurance shown by men whose world has narrowed down to that little corner of a great war which they are fighting for their country. To fight on night and day in the trenches, under avalanches of murdering metal and storms of rending shrapnel, calls for higher qualities than those short sharp gusts of conflict which in former days were called battles. Then men

faced death in the open, weapon in hand, cheered by colour and music and the personal contest, man upon man outright, greatly daring for a few sharp hours. Now all the pageantry is gone; the fight rages without ceasing; men must eat and sleep in the line of fire; death and mutilation ravage over them even while they rest. Nerves have given way, men have gone mad under this prolonged strain, and the marvel is that any have borne it; yet they have not only borne it, they have triumphed over it. These have known the exaltation of stripping life of its impedimenta to do a thing set for them to do; giving up all for an idea. The great obsession is on them; they are swayed and possessed by something greater than themselves; they live in an atmosphere which, breathing, inflames them to the utmost of their being.

There was a corner in the British lines where men had fought for days until the place was a shambles; where food could only rarely reach them; where they stood up to their knees in mud and water, where men endured, but where Death was the companion of their fortitude. Yet after a lull in the firing there came from some point in the battered trench the new British battle-cry, "Are we downhearted!" And then, as we are told, one bloodstained spectre feebly raised himself above the broken parapet, shouted "No!" and fell back dead. There spoke a spirit of high endurance, of a shining defiance, of a courage which wants no pity, which exults as it wends its way hence.

We are indeed learning new lessons in human nature; and we have needed them. We have never fully gauged its illimitable capacity for expansion until now, when we have seen it measured against the giant engines and leviathan forces of modern

war. Stage by stage, as the art of destruction has developed and the perils of warfare have increased, human nature has shown itself able to adapt itself to the new conditions, however staggering the test. M. Bloch argued his case on well-established premises. It had become a military axiom that even the best and most disciplined troops could not be expected to endure more than a certain percentage of slaughter. The Duke of Wellington placed the limit at about thirty per cent.; and that was a high figure compared with the casualties in even the greatest battles of the last two centuries. In the American Civil War there were only a few battles where regiments lost as much as seventy per cent. of their strength, and the world was shocked by the slaughter. Such losses have become almost commonplace in this war. There have been stories of German regiments reduced from three thousand men to as many hundreds. Our own losses, of which we can speak with greater certainty, have sometimes been as great: as in the record of a certain British regiment which, at Mons, had only eighty men left unwounded out of one thousand. These eighty men, with some others who were cured of their wounds, were sent to another battalion of the same regiment which itself, later, lost eighty per cent. of its strength. The survivors again became the nucleus of a new battalion, which was fighting in Northern France at the beginning of the year. In it were men who had gone through all the fighting from Mons to the Yser, and whose cool courage fails not yet. One of these men wounded and in hospital said to a friendly enquirer, " I was at Mongs, I done a bit up along o' Wipers (Ypres) and if it 'adn't bin for this "— he lifted his wounded arm —" I'd a' got over to Liegee

(Liége) p'r'aps, an' 'ad *a look raound!*" O happy warrior, who has so many comrades of his own thinking!

The punishment which our regiments stand without flinching is amazing, especially if we contrast the personnel of the armies of to-day with those tough customers that fought under Marlborough, Frederick the Great or Napoleon; if we consider how much larger a proportion of our soldiers is now recruited from the cities. It has long been held that the man of the countryside makes the better soldier, in that he is the most inured to hardship and the least gifted with imagination — imagination is held in wide suspicion in the British Isles. Its superabundant presence in the Celt and the Gaul, though it made for surprising *élan* when things were going well, was supposed to make those fine fighting men less valuable in moments of trouble and retreat. We were constantly told to look to the patient Moujik or the stolid Turk for proof that lack of education was less hurtful than excess of imagination. Yet we find the city-bred soldiers of Britain, France, and Germany also, as enduring of hardship and as tenacious of purpose as the country-bred soldiers of Austria, Russia and Serbia. It is unfortunately true that excessive centralization in England has reduced the physique of all too great numbers below the military standard; but in those who reach it, there is not only no sign that capacity for soldiering has grown less, but there is abundant evidence to show that it is greater.

It is no disrespect to other nations to say that the world has never seen anything quite like the Tommy Atkins of to-day, so resourceful, so intelligent, so careless of danger, so reliable and exact, and withal so good-humoured. Yet not too much must be said

in his praise; for, unconscious of any extraordinary merit, he dislikes and distrusts the frontal attack of the eulogist. If you have bouquets to present to him you must approach him on the quarter. Personally he is a modest man, professionally he is the proudest man on earth. Letters of his have been published by the hundred, and they may be read in vain for boastful account of any exploit of his own. He is not reticent, however, when his regiment is mentioned in orders; nor is he backward in expressing his view that the British army is " a clinker."

It is not his fellow-countrymen alone who praise the British soldier. He has been extolled in the highest terms by our Allies who fight beside him. A Russian officer speaks of his coolness, his doggedness, his constitutional incapacity to submit to defeat. There is good support of this opinion in the official despatches themselves which tell, for instance, of five thousand men holding off a force of over eighty thousand for several days. Through that stubborn valour, acknowledged by all the world, including the enemy also, runs a vein of gaiety which has made the French describe the British soldiers as " cheerful devils "; together with a curious unsentimental gentleness, the natural product of kindly good-humour and unspoiled nature.

" I thought I had a heart of stone," wrote home a soldier, " but I cried my heart out all night." At what? At the sight of a little girl dying. Yet he had seen hundreds die, had himself slain men without a pang, and could make a dry jest or loosen a shaft of irony in his own naïve, primitive way, in appalling scenes of horror. He may have been one of those who roared with laughter when a comrade sat on a shell which exploded and tore his nether garments to ribbons.

Tommy Atkins is perhaps unique in this, that to him everything is a great game, in other words, a thing of contest and of skill. "This show," he and his officers call some stern and even gruesome battle-piece from which the actors disappear in blood and flame. He feels deeply, but he "takes shame" to show his feelings. He is a patriot, but his patriotism seldom finds vent in words. It was a splendid thing, as those who beheld it have told us, to see a German column, predestined to destruction by its antiquated formation, rolling majestically to attack and singing their great battle-hymn, "Deutschland über Alles." Brave battle-songs were sung by the men of North and South in the American Civil War. Tommy Atkins, however, will have none of these; it savours too much of "Miss Nancy." So he marches to the lilt of "Tipperary," and charges as if going into a football scrimmage, shouting "Keep your eye on the ball." He is an odd mixture: fierce yet friendly, crafty yet simple; remorseless in action, yet bearing no illwill to his foes. It would be incredible that a British General should try to stir him to action by circulating a "Song of Hate." Were he to do so he would be regarded with an alien eye. Tommy Atkins' shrewd and observant sense is strangely acute, grimly amusing, and dramatically effective; it is artless yet full of art. Perhaps the best epitome of modern battle with its artillery terrors is to be found in this tense, elliptic description of a wounded fighter: "First you 'ears a 'ell of a noise — and then the nurse says, 'Try and drink a little o' this'!"

One of the most characteristic bits of humour of the class from which Tommy Atkins and Jack Tar come, is to be found in a letter of a bold and bonny gunner on one of the British warships which fought

and sank the German ships at Heligoland. A printed copy of this letter, once in the author's possession, has disappeared, but a sentence which is the occasion of the reference is a fixed memory. The sailorman graphically and simply describes the fight, as though making a brief business report; without brag, without mock modesty, and in a spirit of comfortable satisfaction. After giving the details of the preparations, the fighting, and the rescue of the German sailors; after reporting it all as would a police-court reporter used to gruesome scenes: the ship going down, the struggle of the Germans in the water, shot at by their own officers, he suddenly wound up by saying, "We cleared up what we could see — *and back to lunch at one o'clock!*"

Good, gallant, human, well-disciplined Jack Tar, the child of nature, of firm friendly discipline, and of his country; all he wants is a first-class ship and the enemy in front of him, and he stands where Nelson stood, and does as Nelson did in his own modern way. And how well his officer knows him! They are both of a piece. That officer of one of the ships which sank the *Gneisenau,* the *Scharnhorst,* the *Leipzig* and the *Nürnberg* knew what he was doing when, being told that the enemy was in sight, coolly ordered breakfast for the men and a pipe afterwards; and then opened fire with a "cool-headed lot" upon the foe and sunk him. It is a companion-piece to the story of the commander's valet who, opening the door of his master's cabin, said, "Enemy ships sighted, sir. Will you have your bath before or after action?" Are they not pretty pendants to the story of Drake and the game of bowls at Plymouth?

One of the best portraits lately painted of Tommy Atkins is to be found in a January issue of the *Westminster Gazette.* It is taken from a letter written

to his relatives by a young Territorial serving in France. The passage is as graphic in its phrases as it is faithful in observation:

"They are *men,* unpolished in the smooth, self-deception of the would-be-genteel, heavy of hand but big of heart, who do a kindness, and answer thanks with a mild cuss, and who will walk through Hell to help a 'pal' and curse him for a blank nuisance whilst they do it. Here, if a man makes a mistake, and throws out of gear a convoy, say, the rest of the convoy will inform him in no uncertain manner, what particular brand of idiot he is, his probable parentage and his absolutely certain destination after this mortal life, but in the same breath they will get him out of his trouble and put him into line again. Who will laugh at and jeer unmercifully at a man whose horse has thrown him, and whilst they laugh will catch his horse and set him thereon and tell him not to be such a blankety idiot again. In the various grades of life in which I have mingled I have never met this spirit before, and I shall have some painful surprises when peace is declared and I become once more a private citizen."

Is our soldier of to-day a new product, or is he the same man as his ancestors of the Napoleonic wars and the men who fought at Minden? It is safe to say that in character he is the same; he has only changed in externals. He is, however, more intelligent, more alert, perhaps more critical, not to say shyly cynical, almost certainly more gentle. It is doubtful if he could do the ugly work of Badajoz and St. Sebastian; but in all that goes to the making of a man he has shown himself the equal of all his naval ancestors. The historian of the future, when he tells the story of Mons and the Marne, the Yser and the Aisne, will be able to say with Napier, "And then was seen with what majesty the British soldier fights."

But when we praise our British soldiers, we remember also that bravery is not a monopoly of our

own. It has been greatly shown by men of every race in this war, and in a rare degree by the men of those small nationalities hated and despised by modern Germany. Friend and foe, those who have done the wrong and those who are fighting for the right, have proved that the race of men have tough fibre still, holding on to life and the enemy with equal tenacity.

Great figures too, on the upper levels, have emerged from the fog of war, great generals who will stand beside the famous captains of the past — Joffre and French and the Archduke Nicholas, and one who takes his place in the Valhalla of very perfect Knights, the King of tortured Belgium, the man who has lost everything save his own indomitable soul.

One other thing still this war has done which must be passed to the credit-balance. Many of the artificialities of existence have vanished like moving mists; barriers of class have been lowered; the rancours of creeds and parties have been laid aside; we are, for the hour, back again in an age when all were for the State. The Jewish Rabbi holds the crucifix to the lips of the dying Christian; Catholic curé and Protestant parson pray side by side above the common open grave; France in her agony turns to the Church, and religion once more ministers to the State. The democratic orator apologizes for his tirades against the idle rich, the rich abjure frivolity, and level down their way of living that they may better help the poor. Old grievances of employer and employed lose their stark insistence and acuteness in the knowledge that work to-day is work for the Motherland.

It need hardly be said that not all of this can be permanent. When the war is over, normal life will resume its ancient course of individual ambition and

the selfish quest for profit and pleasure; but a great lesson of selflessness has been taught us, and some of it will find its way into the nation's life for its eternal good. All too soon again, there will come the clash of parties and the jar of interests, and some estrangement of classes too; but the things we are learning will be burned into us who have seen and known them, too deep ever quite to be forgotten; and for many a year, may be, for many a generation, estrangement between the many sections of the one people which we have proved ourselves to be, will be less than it has ever been. We have seen what we have seen, and our world of life and action will never be the same again.

"O woe is me, to have seen what I have seen, see what I see!"

Yet a greater work than we have ever done, a bigger thing than we have ever known, lies before the people of this Empire. Reconstruction, rehabilitation on an enormous scale, and under wholly changed conditions of the national life, will call for all the capacities and activities of which we are capable. It is a great thing to have lived in these days of the giant things; it will be a greater still, to those of us who are spared, to live on to face the giant tasks of to-morrow.

Among those tasks for which the British Empire will be immediately responsible is the organization and consolidation of the forces and powers which this war has made manifest throughout the King's Dominions. This struggle has taught the world that the British Empire is a reality; that wherever the Flag flies the spirit of responsibility for the well-being of all exists and manifests itself in the hour of danger as in the days of peace. All the separate

States of the Empire have gathered themselves together for one definite effort and task — the preservation of the British position in the world; and the destruction of a military ambition which would, by the sword, over-rule the universe and impose the policies and ideals of one country on all the rest. But when this war is over and done, and our task accomplished, there will remain great problems which gravely concern the future activities and prosperity of the Empire. Being successful, we shall face the fact that vast new territories — probably New Guinea, Samoa, the Marshall Islands, the Cameroons, Southwest Africa and East Africa, together with Egypt and Cyprus — may be added to our great colonial dominions. It is impossible to think that, with the lessons taught us by this war, the experiments made, and the experience gained in co-operation for Imperial purposes before the war, the various national constitutions throughout the Empire will not be brought into closer relation for a common purpose.

Among the millions of British men fighting in this war there are hundreds of thousands of soldiers from the Oversea Dominions — civilians, doing military duty in a voluntary spirit, and with an understanding of the immediate great issue. All of these will have new conceptions of Imperial responsibility, while those who in their home-lands watch their activities will have learnt the great lesson that organization is absolutely indispensable, if we are to get the most and the best out of our reciprocal support. But also they will have learnt that we must not again as an Empire face the possibility of a surprise by an ambitious military power seeking to expand itself by the rape of other people's territories.

The spirit of organization of our vast military and

naval experience which has had ample scope in this war, and has suffered from extemporization — though skilful and wonderful extemporization — will find an opportunity without parallel, as it will face a stern duty such as it has never faced before. That stern duty will be to see that the Empire shall have no "ramshackle" elements; that it shall have found itself; that its many parts shall be adjusted to fit into a common scheme of defence and commerce, and of reciprocal commercial development.

However victoriously Great Britain and the Oversea Dominions emerge from this war, it will be with the sense of a new and a grave responsibility; for we shall have one quarter of the world, with our Flag planted in every corner of it, and our civilization working in all the seas. We shall be immense in potential force as in actual power; but we shall be faced by financial burdens greater than we have ever known, and those burdens will have to be shared by every individual in our wide-spread communities in one way or the other. For many years some loyal men have laboured to make the individuals of this Empire understand the responsibilities attached to Imperial power. This war has enforced that teaching, which, however, has not yet reached and possessed all men everywhere under our flag. The few who taught must now be the many. Also a Spartan spirit must be preached and practised, and men must realize that to acquire wealth merely to enjoy luxury, though it may serve some material interests of the nation, may be in effect unpatriotic, if not anti-national. We shall need to cultivate national economy in its highest sense; we shall require to study more than we have ever done the value of things that matter: but if the individual sees the need and feels the duty the nation will not fail.

APPENDICES

I

CHRONOLOGY OF GERMAN HISTORY AND POLICY SINCE 1862

I.— FIRST PERIOD

The formation of the German Empire. 1862–1871

1862	Bismarck becomes Prussian Minister-President.
1864	Austria and Prussia make war on Denmark and become joint rulers of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg.
1866	The Seven Weeks' War between Prussia and Austria. Prussian hegemony.
1867	Foundation of North German Confederation.
1870–1	Franco-German War, South German States join Prussia.
1871	William, King of Prussia, proclaimed German Emperor at Versailles (Jan. 18th). Bismarck first Chancellor.

II.— SECOND PERIOD

Interior organization of Empire and the consolidation of its position as a Great Power in Europe. 1871–1890

1872	League of the Three Emperors (William, Franz-Josef, and Alexander II).
1879	Alliance with Austria.
1883	Italy joins this — The Triple Alliance.
1884	Secret Treaty with Russia (never completely published).
1888	Death of Emperors William I and Frederick III. Accession of William II.
1890	Bismarck's resignation.

III.— THIRD PERIOD

Germany's active policy in promoting ambition to become a Great Power beyond the bounds of Europe. Roughly since 1890

[1] 1884	Foundation of German S.W. Africa, Togoland, German Cameroons.

[1] The first two entries of Period III belong chronologically to Period II, but philosophically to Period III.

1885	Foundation of German E. Africa, German New Guinea (Kaiser Wilhelmsland), Bismarck Archipelago.
1890–4	Chancellorship of Von Caprivi: relatively greater importance of Emperor.
1890	Secret Treaty of 1884 with Russia not renewed.
1894–1900	Chancellorship of Von Hohenlohe.
1896	Kruger telegram.
1897	Navy Programme, fixing permanent Navy and placing Naval Budget to a great extent out of Reichstag's control.
1898	Kiao Chou created a German Protectorate.
1899	Purchase of the Caroline, Marianne, and Pelew Islands by Germany from Spain on conclusion of the Spanish-American War.
1899–1900	By arrangement with Great Britain and U. S. A., Germany obtains two largest Samoa Islands.
[[1]1899–1902	Boer War.]
1900–9	Chancellorship of Prince Bülow.
1900	Second Navy Programme, nearly doubling permanent Navy.
1903–4	Germany seeks *entente* with Russia — ended by Russo-Japanese War.
[1904	Anglo-French *Entente*.]
1905	Kaiser's visit to Tangier.
1905–6	Third Navy Programme.
1906	Conference of Algeciras.
[1907	Anglo-Russian Agreement.]
1908	Fourth Navy Programme.
1908–9	Bosnian crisis, ending in annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria in spite of Russian protest.
1909	Bethmann-Hollweg becomes Chancellor.
1911	Agadir crisis.
[1912	Turkish and Balkan War.]
	Fifth Navy Programme.
1913	Increase of Army (to counterbalance weakening of Turkey and to meet requirements of approaching war).

1 Certain dates bearing only indirectly on German Policy, are enclosed in square brackets.

II

THE HAGUE CONVENTION OF OCTOBER 18TH, 1907, SIGNED BY GERMANY, PROVIDES AS FOLLOWS:

Art. 2.— The inhabitants of an unoccupied territory, who, on the enemy's approach, rise spontaneously in arms in order to fight the invading troops, without having had time to organize themselves according to Art. 1, shall be considered as combatants if they carry their arms openly and respect the laws and uses of war.

Art. 3.— The armed forces of the contending parties may be composed of combatants and non-combatants. In the case of capture by the enemy, both have the right to be treated as prisoners of war.

Art. 4.— The prisoners of war are under the power of the government of the enemy, but not of the individuals or groups who have taken them.

They must be treated with humanity.

Everything belonging to them personally, with the exception of arms, horses, and military papers, remains their own property.

Art. 22.— The right of the combatants, concerning the ways of injuring the enemy, are not without limits.

Art. 23.— Besides the prohibitions settled by special conventions, it is particularly forbidden:

(*a*) To use poison or poisoned weapons;

(*b*) To kill or wound treacherously men belonging to the adverse army or nation;

(*c*) To kill or wound an enemy who, having laid down his arms or having no means of defence, has surrendered unconditionally;

(*d*) To declare that no quarter will be given.

(*e*) To use arms, missiles, or material which may cause unnecessary harm;

(*f*) To use unduly the flag of truce, the national flag, or the military badges and uniform of the enemy, as well as the distinctive marks of the Geneva Convention;

(*g*) To destroy or seize the property of the enemy, except in the cases when that seizure or destruction should be imperiously required by the necessities of war;

(*h*) To declare extinct, suspended or void in law the rights and legal actions of the citizens of the adverse country.

It is likewise forbidden to compel the citizens of the adverse party to take a part in the operations of war waged against their own country, even if they had been in the service of the enemy before the beginning of the war.

Art. 25.— It is forbidden to attack or bombard by any means

whatever, towns, villages, houses, or buildings which are undefended.

Art. 27.— In cases of sieges and bombardments, all necessary steps must be taken to spare as much as possible all buildings used for sacred worship, arts, sciences, and public relief; historic buildings, hospitals, places where the wounded and the sick are gathered, provided those buildings are not used at the same time for any military purpose.

Art. 28.— It is forbidden to pillage a town or place, even after it has been taken by storm.

Art. 50.— No collective penalty, either as a fine or otherwise, can be required from the populations on account of individual acts, for which they could not be considered responsible as a whole.

Art. 51.— No tax shall be levied, except according to a written order from a general in command and on his own responsibility.

It will be collected, as much as possible, according to the rules for the assessment of the existing taxes.

The tax-payer shall be given a receipt for any money paid.

Art. 53.— The army occupying a territory shall be allowed to seize only the money, funds, and valuables belonging exclusively to the State, the magazines of arms, means of transport, provisions, and generally all personal property of the State, which can be used for the operations of war.

III

KUNDMACHUNG

TRANSLATION OF THE PROCLAMATION WHICH APPEARED IN THE *TRANSVAAL LEADER* ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 29TH, 1914.

GERMAN PARTIAL MOBILIZATION:

NOTICE

In Austria-Hungary a partial mobilization . . . has been ordered by his Majesty.

Those liable to service who in consequence of this notification have to appear will be informed by a card summoning them.

Those who are summoned will receive travelling expenses.

Those who are summoned, and who have not the necessary means for travelling at their disposal, are required in order to obtain travelling expenses to announce themselves at the nearest representative of his Royal and Imperial Majesty and produce the card summoning them.

The others will receive travelling expenses as an additional payment to their other expenses.

Those who are summoned whose dwelling place is nearer the boundary of the monarchy (invasion station) than the office of the

nearest representative of his Royal and Imperial Highness are required to go direct to the invasion station.

E. D[illegible]
[redacted]

(*At the Court and State Printing Works.*)

Kundmachung.

In Österreich-Ungarn wurde von Seiner Majestät eine teilweise Mobilisierung ([redacted]) angeordnet.

Diejenigen Dienstpflichtigen, welche aus diesem Anlasse einzurücken haben, werden hievon durch Einberufungskarten verständigt.

Den Einberufenen werden die Reisekosten vergütet.

Zur Erfolgung des Reisekostenbeitrages haben sich jene Einberufenen, welche nicht über die erforderlichen Reisemittel verfügen, unter Vorweis der Einberufungskarte bei der nächstgelegenen k. u. k. Vertretungsbehörde zu melden.

Den übrigen Einberufenen werden die Reisekosten nach den bestehenden Vergütungssätzen nachträglich ausbezahlt.

Einberufene, deren Wohnsitz der Monarchiegrenze (Einbruchstation) näher gelegen ist, als dem Amtssitze der nächstgelegenen k. u. k. Vertretungsbehörde, haben sich direkt in die Einbruchstation zu begeben.

E. D[illegible]

Aus der k. k. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei

IV

STATEMENT BY HERR BALLIN

While the final proofs of this book were passing through the press, Herr Ballin, the head of the Hamburg-Amerika Steamship Company, and a close friend of the Kaiser, made a statement to Mr. von Wiegand for publication in America. Herr Ballin had just returned from the front, where he had a long audience with the Emperor, whose views of the war he was authorized to make public. Having said that the Kaiser had declared that he did not want this war, Herr Ballin was asked: "Who then does the Emperor consider responsible for the war?" His reply was as follows:

"We all feel that this war has been brought about by England. We honestly believe that Sir Edward Grey could have stopped it.

"If, on the first day, he had declared 'England refuses to go to war because of the internal questions between Serbia and Austria,' then Russia and France would have found a way to compromise with Austria.

"If, on the other hand, Sir Edward Grey had said England was ready to go to war, then, for the sake of Germany, probably Austria might have been more ready to compromise.

"But, by leaving his attitude uncertain and letting us understand that he was not bound to go to war, Sir Edward Grey certainly brought about the war. If he had decided at once, one way or the other, Sir Edward Grey could have avoided this terrible thing."

In August, 1914, Herr Ballin held different views. He wrote a letter to the London *Times,* dated August 2nd, with the object of having it published on August 3rd, the morning of the day on which Sir Edward Grey was to make his momentous speech in the House of Commons. *The Times* held the letter back. Late on the night of August 3rd *The Times,* by accident, received a telegram addressed to the London agent of the Wolff Press Bureau, the German official telegraph agency. It ran thus: "*Times* is publishing Ballin's statement on the situation. Please telegraph it word for word (signed) Wolff Bureau."

In that statement, published in *The Times* of August 12th, Herr Ballin lays the responsibility for the war, not on England, but on Russia.

"Everything has been wrecked upon the attitude of Russia. . . . It must be stated again; Russia alone forces the war upon Europe. Russia alone must carry the full weight of responsibility."

The conflict between these statements is, therefore, singularly impressive. On one day it is Russia, on the next it is England which is accused of having caused the war. Both cannot be true. The conscience of Germany must be uneasy when, to demonstrate her innocence, she makes two charges of guilt which are mutually destructive.

For the full text of Herr Ballin's statement to Mr. von Wiegand see the New York *World,* April 14th, 1915. See also London *Times,* August 12th, 1914 and April 15th, 1915.

INDEX

Aerschot, 74, 159, 325, 357, 359, 372.
Agadir, 132, 182, 186.
Agram, 153, 304.
Aguila, 354.
Aircraft in War, 386-8.
Albania, 134, 303, 305.
Albert, King of the Belgians, 197, 220, 228, 242, 405.
Alexander the Great, 3.
Algeciras, 14, 182.
Algeria, 280.
All-German League, 61.
Allizé, M., 193.
Alsace-Lorraine, 2, 7, 17, 25, 53, 91-3, 311.
Alva, 45, 316.
American Civil War, 316, 320, 399.
Amiral Ganteaume, 352.
Andenne, 357, 365.
Andrejanoff, von, 69.
Angeberg, Count d', *Le Congrès de Vienne et les Traités de 1815*, 20, 21.
Antwerp, 247, 371.
Arabia, 301.
Armies, numbers in, 383.
Army and Navy Register, 107.
Arras, 347.
Asquith, H. H., 216, 255, 258.
Asturias, hospital ship, 348, 355.
Athens, 199.
Atlantic, Emperor of, 133.
Atrocity, systematic and organized, 342-79.
Attila, 44, 45, 330, 343.
Augustenburg, 93.
Australia, 90, 137, 356.
Austria, 6, 14-16, 20, 21, 25, 82, 93, 102, 134, 143-58, 162, 179, 181, 187, 190-228, 230, 231, 238, 247, 282, 289, 298-309, 312, 400.
Aymé, M., 43.
Bagdad Railway, the, 129, 130, 181, 301.
Balkan Question, the, 291-313.
Barnardiston, Colonel, 270-2.
Barnum, Phineas T., 54.
Baron, 377.
Battery L, 394.
Battles, numbers of combatants in, 383.
Bavaria, 193.
Bayonet, the, 388, 389.
Bazaine, Marshal, 124.
Bedier, Professor, *Les Crimes Allemands d'après des témoignages allemands*, 355.
Beethoven, 69.
Belgium, 20, 21, 71, 73, 78, 82, 91, 109, 110, 134, 156, 159, 179, 197, 230, 236, 238-40, 241, 244-76, 301, 310, 311, 312, 325-26, 327, 333, 358.
Belgium's neutrality, 244-77, 327.
Belgrade, 149, 154, 190, 196, 198, 222, 303, 307.
Belliaud, General, 331.
Below, Herr von, 261, 263.
Berchtold, Count von, 210.
Berlin, 15, 51, 87, 91, 96, 100, 127, 142, 145, 183, 190, 192, 196, 200, 207, 213, 221, 225, 232-4, 295, 358, 391.
Bernhardi, General von, 1, 8, 22, 23, 71, 77, 85, 97, 108, 125, 172.
Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*, 1, 72, 82, 84, 89, 94, 96, 108, 110, 111, 170.
Bethmann-Hollweg, Dr. von, 41, 48, 74, 82, 132, 158, 179, 183, 194, 197, 210, 211, 213, 215, 219-21, 229, 238, 251, 252, 257-63, 264-70.
Bieberstein, Baron Marschall von, 346, 350, 352.
Bielefeld, 43.

Bismarck, Prince von, 8, 10, 15-17, 19, 21, 24, 25, 27, 29, 36-41, 46, 47, 56, 58, 87-88, 91, 93, 98, 109, 120, 121, 126-9, 168, 179, 217, 273, 280, 295, 308, 358, 366, 367.
Bismarck, Prince von, *Reflections and Reminiscences,* 110.
Bloch, M., 393, 399.
Blucher, 322.
Bluntschli, Professor, 345.
Bode, Dr., 78.
Boehn, General von, 360, 372, 374.
Bolivia, 94, 106, 115.
Bosnia, 91, 143, 151, 153, 181, 189, 191, 294, 296, 299, 304.
Botha, General, 14.
Bourdon, M., *The German Enigma,* 235.
Brazil, 94, 106, 114, 115.
Bremen, 45.
Bright, John, 256.
British Colonies, how acquired, 161-5.
Buchanan, Sir George, 198.
Bucharest, 199.
Bulgaria, 91, 102, 134, 146, 294-6, 303, 305.
Bülow, Prince von, 2, 7, 8, 25-7, 48, 128, 131, 147, 155, 169, 170, 176, 182, 186, 285, 330, 340, 364.
Bülow, *Imperial Germany,* 7, 8, 23, 24, 27, 28, 72, 88, 112, 129, 182, 183.
Bunsen, Sir Maurice de, 204.
Busse, Dr. A., in *North American Review,* 118.
Bynkershoek, von, 318.

Caillaux, M., 135.
Cairo, 75, 287.
Calais, 186.
Calmette, M., 135.
Calwer, Richard, in *Sozialistiche Monatsheft,* 113.
Cambon, Jules, 193, 220, 225-7, 231, 232, 238, 253.
Campbell - Bannerman, Sir Henry, 175, 176.
Cameroons, 161, 407.
Canada, 120, 137, 138, 163, 311, 356.
Caprivi, Count, 15, 48, 129.
Carlyle, Thomas, 58, 145.
Chaka, 343.
Charlemagne, 3, 29.
Charleroi, 357.
Charles, King of Roumania, 294.
Charles I, 37.
Charles II, 163.
Charles V, 108.
Cherbuliez, M., 37.
China, 45, 80, 114, 286, 321.
Chinese War (1900), 334.
Chinot, Abbé, 369.
Chirol, Sir Valentine, 38.
Christiania, 186.
Churchill, Winston S., 185.
Civilization of Warfare, 314-41.
Clarendon, Lord, 254.
Clausewitz, Karl von, 61, 346, 358.
Clive, 163.
Coblenz, 53.
Colbert, J. B., 41.
Cologne, 343.
Congo, the, 186.
Conrad, Georg, 69.
Constantinople, 208, 251, 282, 286, 287, 289, 295.
Cramb, Professor, 18.
Crackanthorpe, Mr., 198.
Croatia, 151, 153, 189, 304.
Croismare, 360.
Cyprus, 407.

Daily Chronicle, 131.
Daily Telegraph, 14, 107.
Damascus, 130.
Danish War (1864), 332, 339.
Dar-es-Salaam, 130.
Davis, Richard Harding, in *Scribner's Magazine,* 369.
Dawson, W. H., *The Evolution of Modern Germany,* 113, 335.
Decadence, 390-2.

Delbrück, Professor, 72, 97-100.
Denmark, 15, 25, 82, 91, 93, 119, 166, 171, 242, 245.
Derby, Lord, 254.
Dernburg, Herr, 71-3, 77, 102, 169.
Dewey, Admiral, 120.
Diedrichs, Admiral, 120.
Dillon, Dr., 146, 193.
Dinant, 74, 159, 325, 357, 361-2, 368, 372.
Disfurth, Major-General, 80.
Dix, Herr, *Deutschland auf den Hochstrassen des Weltwirtschafteverkehrs*, 119.
Djavid Bey, 289.
Drink Question, the, 392.
Ducarne, General, 270-2.
Dreikaiserbund, The, 127.
Duplix, 163-4.

Eberlein, First Lieutenant, 373.
Edgcumbe, Lieutenant, 376.
Edward VII, 178.
Egypt, 132, 128, 280, 281, 287, 301, 407.
Ehrlich, 78.
Eisenhart, Dr., 124.
Eitel, Fritz, Prince, 372.
Eliot, Dr., 71.
Elst, Baron van der, 261.
Ems, 25.
Enver Pasha, 284, 287, 289.
Eyschen, M., 264.
"Fabricius," *see Fortnightly Review.*

Falaba, 354.
Ferdinand, Archduke, *see* Franz Ferdinand.
Fermo, 354.
Fichte, J. G., 63.
Fischer, Kuno, *Hegel*, 81.
Flanders, 328.
Fletcher, C. R. L., 77.
Forbender, General von, 373.
Forgach, Count, 154, 155.
Fortnightly Review, 115, 120.
Fox, Frank, in *Nineteenth Century*, 370, 371.
France, 7, 13, 16, 20, 21, 27, 31, 33, 34, 51, 61, 74, 82, 85, 90, 92, 93, 99, 101, 102, 106, 109, 110, 124, 126-9, 132, 134-6, 141, 142, 145, 149, 156, 158, 159, 162-4, 170, 179, 179-3, 186, 187, 192, 198-200, 202, 214-16, 218-20, 223-8, 231, 232, 237-242, 246, 247, 252-4, 257-68, 270-5, 279, 283, 284, 296, 326, 328.
Francis-Joseph, 45, 134, 189.
Franco-German War, 320, 333.
Frankel, Mrs., 364.
Franz - Ferdinand, Archduke, 141, 143-144, 148, 149, 155-6, 160, 190, 192, 229, 306, 307, 308.
Frederick (Barbarossa), 4, 29.
Frederick the Great, 16, 21, 36, 37, 57, 58, 75, 92, 93, 163, 217, 265, 318, 400.
Frederick III, 128.
Frederick William I, 36.
Frederick William IV, 16, 18, 19, 37.
French, Genl. Sir John, 405.
Friedjung, Dr., 153, 154, 189.
Fuchs, Dr., 336.
Fulda, 69.

Gallenga, Mr., 339.
Geffcken, Professor, 249, 273.
Geneva Convention, 315, 319, 343.
Genghis Khan, 5.
George III of England, 18.
George, D. Lloyd, 182.
German culture, 58-64, 94-7.
German organization, 59-60.
German Societies in the United States, 116, 117.
German War-Book, 68, 69, 328, 344.
"Germania Triumphans," *see Ruckblick auf die weltgeschichtlichen Ereifnisse der Jahrs* 1900-15, *von einem Grossdeutschen.*
Germany, an absolute monarchy, 33-55.

Germany, its colonial ambitions, 97-104.
Germany, its European expansion, 87-96.
Germany, its national character, 1-32.
Germany, its self-consciousness, 56.
Gheluvelt, 397.
Gibraltar, 162.
Giesl, Baron von, 150.
Giolitti, Signor, 156-8, 226.
Gladstone, W. E., 242, 245, 247, 256, 257, 259, 271, 294.
Gneisenau, Graf von, 59.
Gneisenau, 403.
Goeben, General von, 333.
Goethe, 8, 69, 125, 145, 337.
Goltz, Field-Marshal von der, 61, 79, 85, 345, 364.
Goluchowski, Count, 14.
Gomery, 349.
Gordons, the, 396.
Goschen, Sir Edward, 132, 158, 201, 210, 219, 224, 227, 228, 238, 251, 252, 257, 274.
Great Britain, 2, 7, 12-14, 31, 33, 43, 45, 51, 61, 69, 72, 78, 85, 88, 90, 92, 97, 99-106, 110-13, 116, 117, 120, 123, 124, 126, 127, 132, 135, 136-41, 146, 149, 156, 158-88, 194-206, 210-24, 229-47, 251-62, 265-72, 275, 279, 283, 286, 287, 297, 298, 312.
Greece, 91, 134, 293, 296, 303, 305.
Grey, Sir Edward, 144, 145, 158, 178, 182, 192, 194-208, 211-24, 229, 231-2, 236-43, 245, 247, 252-4, 257, 258, 269, 290, 312.
Griscom, Mr., 15.
Gronau, Duke of, 372.
Gronow, Captain, 331, 332.
Grotius, 248, 317.
Gué-d'Hossus, 359.

Haeckel, E. H., 78.
Hague Conference, 11, 110, 315, 319, 322, 323, 324, 327, 328, 343, 346, 347, 350, 351, 353, 364, 367, 373.
Halby, 69.
Haldane, Lord, 183.
Halil Bey, 289.
Hamburg, 228.
Hamburger Nachrichten, 80, 120.
Hamilton, Sir Ian, 321.
Hanonville, 374.
Harden, Maximilian, 70, 71, 186.
Harden, Maximilian *Monarchs and Men*, 47.
Hardenburg, Prince von, 59.
Hardinge, Lord, 138.
Harnack, A., 78.
Hartmann, 79.
Hauptmann, G., 65, 68, 69, 78.
Havelock, Bombardier, 394.
Havre, 348, 352.
Hawaii, 103.
Headlam, Dr. J. W., *England, Germany and Europe*, 111.
Headlam, Dr. J. W., in *Historical Review*, 28, 62.
Heeringen, Herr von, 263.
Hegel, 85.
Heidelberg, 343.
Heine, H., 69.
Henry II of England, 5.
Henry III of England, 5.
Henry V of England, 5, 30, 316.
Henry, Prince of Prussia, 49.
Heroism, deeds of, 394-8.
Herzegovina, 91, 143, 151, 153, 181, 294, 296, 304.
Hill, Dr. David Jayne, 15.
Hindenburg, General von, 337.
Hogan, Sergeant, 396.
Hohenlohe, Prince von, 48, 53, 67.
Holland, 91, 100, 101, 113, 162-4, 214, 242, 245-7, 249, 258, 259, 301, 310, 351.
Holzendorff, *Handbook of International Law*, 250, 346.
Huy, 357.

Icaria, 352.

India, 78, 138, 162-4, 230, 288, 301, 311.
International Law, 317-21.
Ireland, 140, 142.
Italy, 7, 27, 51, 133, 145, 149, 156, 157, 192, 198, 200, 211, 212, 220, 226, 298, 299, 301, 320.

Jagow, Herr von, 193, 196, 197, 200, 224-8, 252, 264, 273, 274.
Jahrbuch fur Deutschlands See-interessen, 121.
Japan, 110.
Java, 165.
Jemappes, 363, 364.
Jerusalem, 132.
Joffre, General, 405.
John, King of England, 316.

Kane, Captain, 121.
Kant, Immanuel, 57, 63.
Khalifa, The, 45.
Kiao Chou, 114, 169.
Kitchener, Lord, 138.
Kladderadatsch, 233.
Klein, Gaston, 377.
Klemt, Under-Officer, 374.
Kölnische Zeitung, 330.
Königsberg, 44.
Kordofan, 287.
Kretzer, 69.
Kriegsbrauch, 322-8, 345-7, 350, 367, 373, 376.
Kruger, President, 13, 132, 169.
Kuhlmann, Baron, 239.

Lasson, Professor, 342.
Law, A. Bonar, 56.
Lawrence, T. J., *International Problems and Hague Conference*, 322.
Leach, Lieutenant, 396.
Ledebur, Major, 378.
Leipzig, 403.
Lichnowski, Prince, 194, 200, 202, 212-15, 237, 238, 252.
Liebnitz, 319.
Liége, 357, 370.
Lille, 97.
Lincoln, Abraham, 243.
Lizst, 78.
Lobengula, 343.
Lokal-Anzeiger, 199.
Lotze, 79.
Louis XIV, 41, 108, 162.
Louvain, 74, 78, 97, 160, 325, 343, 358, 368, 370, 377.
Low, Sidney, in *Quarterly Review*, 62.
Lüder, Professor, 345.
Lunéville, 373.
Luther, M., 84.
Luxemburg, 73, 74, 228, 231, 254, 264, 265, 327.

Macchio, Baron, 198.
McElray, Professor Robt., 18.
Machiavelli, 317.
McKinley, President, 121.
Mahan, Admiral A. T., *The Interest of America in International Conditions*, 106.
Mahdi, The, 45.
Malines, 160, 325, 357, 368, 371.
Mallet, Sir Louis, 251, 283, 286, 287.
Manchuria, 382.
Manila, 105, 116.
Maria Theresa, 16.
Marching songs, 402.
Mariscal, Señor, 105.
Marlborough, Duke of, 318, 383, 400.
Marshall Islands, 162, 407.
Maubeuge, 274.
Maximilian of Mexico, 123, 124.
Maxwell, Sir Herbert, 332.
Mazarin, Cardinal, 41.
Mensdorff, Count Albert, 150, 194-195, 238.
Mercier, Cardinal, 160, 357.
Mesopotamia, 130, 147.
Metternich, 299, 308.
Mexico, 123, 124.
Milton, John, *Paradise Lost*, 74.
Moltke, Count von, 17, 23, 29, 58, 345.
Moltke, General von, 227, 228.
Mommsen, *History of Rome*, 341.

Monroe, Doctrine, the, 99, 102, 105-25.
Monroe, President, 123.
Mons, 399.
Montenegro, 152, 294, 295, 299, 304.
Morgan, Professor J. H., 68, 69, 327.
Morier, Sir Robert, 273.
Morocco, 114, 132, 147, 182, 183, 226, 230, 280.
Moy, 376.
Müffling, General, 332.
Mügge, M. A., 67.
Mullah, The Mad, 45.
Mumm, Baron, 102.
Munich, 193, 273.
Munsterburg, Professor, 107.

Namur, 357.
Napoleon I, 3, 8, 19, 20, 56, 69, 79, 92, 108, 164, 259, 310, 318, 383, 384, 400.
Napoleon III, 124, 320.
"Nauticus," *see Jahrbuch für Deutschlands Seeinteressen.*
Navy League, 61, 172.
Nation, The, 176.
Nelson, Lord, 394, 403.
Nemours, 334.
Neue Freie Presse, 190.
Neues Pester Journal, 190.
Newfoundland, 162.
New Guinea, 90, 99, 161, 165, 407.
New York, 11, 12.
New York Times, 71, 354.
Nicher, General von, 366.
Nicholas, Archduke, 405.
Nicholas, Tsar, 45, 50, 199, 221.
Nietzsche, F., 42, 61-70, 77, 79, 84, 85, 89, 218, 391.
Nietzsche, F., *The Joyful Wisdom,* 111.
Nogent-le-Roi, 334.
Northomb, M., in *Revue des deux Mondes,* 355, 359, 378.
Nova Scotia, 162, 163.
Nürnberg, 403.

Odessa, 257, 289.
O'Leary, Lance-Corporal, 395, 396.
Oliphant, Laurence, 333, 339.
Oman's *History of England,* 30.
Ostwald, Professor, 366.
Otto the Great, 3.
Outlook, New York, 18.

Pacifism, growth of in Great Britain, 165-88.
Panama Canal, 119, 122.
Pan-Germanische Blätter, 77.
Paris, 193, 199, 236.
Paris, Declaration of, 319.
Peace, Great Britain's endeavours for, 174-88.
Persia, 7, 21, 132, 230, 301.
Petit Bleu, Le, 268.
Philip II, 108, 310.
Pitt, William, 258.
Poland, 2, 19, 91, 92, 109, 222, 302, 328.
Portugal, 94, 113, 161-3, 166, 205.
Potsdam, 214, 219.
Powell, Mr., in *New York Herald,* 371, 372.
Preussicher Jahrbuch, 97.
Princip, 189, 190.
Prizren, 153.
Prochaska, Consul, 153, 189.
Prempeh, King, 343.
Prussia, 4, 6, 16, 18-21, 25-8, 36-8, 40, 46, 48, 49, 52, 57-9, 63, 75, 78, 81, 87, 89, 90, 92-5, 163, 227, 247, 266, 283, 285, 298, 301, 302, 306, 320.
Puffendorf, 319.

Quarterly Review, 36, 37, 38, 62, 75, 82, 83.

Ranke, L. von, *History of the Popes,* 250.
Red Cross, 324, 337, 348, 350, 386.
Rehberg, Count, 37.
Reich, Emil, *Germany's Madness,* 109, 115.
Reichstag, The, 35-7, 48, 51, 73,

126, 181, 184, 227, 251, 260-3, 335.
Reventlow, Count, 85, 172, 235, 342.
Rheims, 97, 343, 347, 365, 368, 369.
Richard I of England, 5, 316.
Richter, J. P., 54.
Robert, M., 377.
Roberts, Lord, 139.
Rodd, Sir Rennell, 208.
Rome, 156, 208, 212.
Röntgen, 78.
Roon, Count von, 24, 59, 234.
Ross, Captain, 363.
Rouen, 333.
Roumania, 91, 134, 146, 294-6, 299.
Ruckblick auf die weltgeschichtlichen Ereifnisse der Jahrs 1900-15 von einem Grossdeutschen, 124.
Rumbold, Sir Horace, 194, 197, 200.
Ruskin, John, *Fors Clavigera,* 330.
Russia, 13, 14, 21, 31, 33, 34, 42, 45, 50, 99, 100, 106, 112, 123, 126-8, 133-6, 141, 143, 144, 146, 148, 149, 153, 156, 158, 159, 166, 170, 178-82, 187, 192, 194-204, 208-10, 212-16, 218, 219, 222-29, 231-234, 237, 238, 254, 257, 260, 273, 283, 284, 288, 289, 293, 295, 298-300, 302, 304-6, 400.
Russo-Japanese War, 320, 321.

Sadowa, 15, 25, 93.
St. Petersburg, 198-9, 222.
St. Petersburg, Declaration of, 319.
Samoa, 99, 103, 121, 165, 171, 407.
San Giuliano, Marquis di, 156, 157, 212.
Sazonoff, M., 158, 199, 200, 215, 223, 236, 290.
Scarborough, 251, 324, 348.
Scharnhorst, G. J. D. von, 59.
Scharnhorst, 403.
Schebeko, Count, 192.
Schiller, 125.
Schleswig-Holstein, 2, 15, 91-3, 311.
Schmoller, Herr, *The Policy of Commerce and Force,* 115.
Schoen, Herr von, 193.
Schopenhauer, A., 69.
Sedan, 25.
Senlis, 74, 325.
Serajevo, 1, 141, 142, 151, 155, 192, 197, 292, 307, 308.
Serbia, 91, 102, 134, 143-57, 189-192, 194-9, 203-30, 282, 293-6, 300, 303-7, 400.
Shaw, G. B., 244.
Shaw, Stanley, *William of Germany,* 43.
Silesia, 2, 16, 19, 91, 109, 163.
Sheringham, 251.
Soissons, 385.
Soldiers, characteristics of our, 401-5.
Sondeburg, 333.
South Africa, 14, 132, 137, 138, 165, 196, 311.
South African War, 320, 321, 375, 382.
Southey, Robert, 331.
Spain, 100, 101, 119, 161, 162.
Spee, Admiral, 285.
Stein, H. F. K., 59.
Stendhal, 69.
Stenger, General, 375.
Stowell, Lord, 319.
Strassburg, 333.
Suarez, Francisco, 317.
Sudermann, H., 69, 78.
Suez Canal, 289, 297.
Swakopmund, 130.
Swinemunde, 14.
Switzerland, 91, 244, 259, 310.
Syria, 301.
Szaparay, Count, 149.

Taft, President, 111.
Tamerlane, 343.
Tamines, 357, 360, 361.

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